

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 34

October 23, 2019

We're in John 3:34-36

For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure. ³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. ³⁶ He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

The reason I have all these Bibles up here is I want to read **John 3:34** in several translations. Try to listen and notice the variations on it. I am not saying the variations will help us to come out to a different conclusion on this, but it is interesting how it is worded in the English translations.

Again, this is John the baptist who is speaking, and he is giving us a number of points. We are on point number 8.

Point # 8:

NKJV New King James Version

³⁴ For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, **for God does not give the Spirit by measure.**

ESV English Standard Version

³⁴ For He whom God has sent utters the words of God, **for he gives the Spirit without measure.** The word “utters” actually is interesting.

NIV New International Version

³⁴ For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, **for God gives the Spirit without limit.**

NASB New American Standard Bible (This is a very literal translation)

³⁴ For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; **for He gives the Spirit without measure.**

Alright. I wanted to put that in the mix here as I go through my notes, and hopefully it will make sense of what he is talking about. This is one of those “*deeper truths*” that you will find in John’s statement here. Let’s dig into it and see what we find.

Point # 8 **He speaks the words of God and the spirits is given without measure.**

Verse 34 seems to say that ‘the God’, ‘the one who sends’ ‘*the sent one*’ speaks the word of God for God, has given Jesus the Spirit without limit. Again, it’s not totally clear in the translations that he gives **Jesus** the Spirit without limit.

He gives the Spirit without limit, but connecting it with the one who speaks the words of God. So, what is the connection between the words of God and the Spirit without limit?

Perhaps **1 Corinthians 2:10** would be a good place to start. It's where he talks about the Spirit going in and *searching out the deep things of God*, and then once he has these truths, he puts them into Spiritual words so that we can understand. "...these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God."

He finds the perfect words to embody the truths of God so that we can understand who this God is *who he has searched out*. So, what is different about Jesus speaking the words of God and others who spoke the words of God? That's one of the questions that came to my mind; is there something different when Jesus is speaking God's word as opposed to other people who spoke the words of God? Is there something unique about Jesus actually speaking those words?

Buffy: He got the words directly from God.

Rod: That is *true* and that may be a key ★ to why it is unique, Jesus speaking the words of God because he did get them directly from God. True. But *other* people were inspired by God as well. All the writers of the New Testament essentially got their words from God. I understand that Jesus got them in a little special way, but ...

Carole: I'm thinking that Jesus was one with God and with the Holy Spirit, so the words, coming through him, he would know how to interpret in a way that man could understand it – man who was in front of him at the time, in that culture etc.

Rod: And one of the things, I don't know if I have this in my notes, but I want you to consider that there is the work of the Holy Spirit over here who is searching the deep things of God, putting them into words; and here is Jesus speaking those same words. So, where are the words coming from? Is it the Holy Spirit or are the words coming from Jesus?

Macy: I think of **John 1:1** where it says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word *was* God." That's just added to the mix.

Rod: Actually, that's where I'm going next. Great minds think together here.

In **John 1:1-2**, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning." Jesus says that the word, the logos, is the very God Himself who has been in the Father's presence, even in his bosom. **John 1:18** says, "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him." That is who He is. In our verse, "words" (when he says "speaks the words of God"); and here's where it gets interesting; it goes back to the word "utter" that was used in the English Standard Version. It is the word "rhema" (ῥημα); not the word "logos" (λογος). It is the word rhema which is the "*spoken* word."

Jesus speaks the "*spoken* word". He **is** the "*spoken* word" of God. He is not just simply the embodiment of the words of God. He speaks the "*spoken* word". The Spirit and the words of God are closely linked here. I told you last week that I had an "**epiphany**" as I was studying the Holy Spirit. Let me go ahead and put it in right now as a way of understanding the Godhead; the trinity; the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.

We've always tried to come up with ways to understand the "three in one". We've used water, ice and air or steam. We've used an egg; the shell, the white and the yolk to explain it. We have used quite different ways to try to capture that. Let me give you another way we might be able to capture it.

I want you to think about the *process that happens in communication*. So much is said about the Spirit being involved in communication, Jesus being involved in communication, and God wanting to communicate with man. So, here is another illustration, although not perfect either. It says the Spirit searches out the deep things of God ... the mind of God. He goes down into the mind of God. *That's where all communication starts ... in the mind*. But there is no communication unless there is some expression. There **has** to be a way for the mind of God to be able to be expressed in some way.

In the human body, here is how it is expressed. Now I understand. You can do hand signals, you can do body language, you can write it down; but the way we *normally* communicate is through the voice.

What makes the voice work? What makes this little organ that we call the 'voice box' work?

Brian: The nerves have to send a signal to the various parts of the mouth. It's the vocal chords and everything working together.

Rod: But you also have to have air - breath. You **have** to have breath. The breath passes over the vocal chords. **The breath is the spirit**. It's what passes over the vocal chords; and what come out on the other end are the words. The words come out on the other end.

Now, I want you to think about the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; it all happens in sync with one another ... the thought, the breath that pushes the word out, and the **word** is the *expression* of it. It all happens together.

What I've studied so far about the Spirit is the Spirit is always instrumental. He was instrumental in creation, He is instrumental in writing the word on our hearts, (there you get the writing part), but He's also instrumental in the "spoken word".

What is *inspiration*? God breathed. What is the *breath* of inspiration? *It's the Spirit of God that breathes and produces words*.

- ✚ The Father is the 'thinker' if you will...the thought.
- ✚ The breath gives instrumentality ... it's the means and the power.
- ✚ Then we have the "exact representation" of the Father, or the thoughts of the Father; **Jesus Himself** expressed as the **Word of God**.

We have all three parts there, working in sync with one another, and when all of that works, we have communication ... that is the Godhead; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. That was my little epiphany.

I found that very useful because I had never thought about the production of words as this idea of breath coming over the vocal chords. So, when someone is choking, one of the things we look for is, is there sound coming out? Can they speak? If they can speak, then there's air. There is evidence that there is air crossing over the vocal chords so the airway is open. If they can't talk; they can't speak; then you know you probably have some trouble.

Jean: If they are coughing, they are okay too. It's when they can't cough, there's a problem. They are probably gone.

Rod: Yes.

So that was my little epiphany and I'm working on developing these ideas. I know it will be slow-going for the next 'how many years' I will be working on this.

Jesus clearly *emphasizes His close connection with His Father*. Throughout His ministry He is always talking about Him and His Father and the connection between the two. But His connection with the Spirit is not neglected and it's not ignored either.

I would expect this community of the Godhead to be present in the ministry of Jesus. What must it mean to have the Spirit "without measure"?

Now, this is where I am really struggling so far in my study (of the Holy Spirit), because I have found in the Old Testament that there are places where you see terms like the Spirit of God resting on a person, or the Spirit of God filling a person. There are different ways in which the Spirit ... you can be baptized in the Spirit. There are different expressions about how a person comes in contact with the Spirit.

But what does it mean in *this* text – Jesus to be filled with the Spirit without measure? If something is without measure, it cannot be measured; then, it is boundless or infinite. It is like the dimensions of love of God or the wisdom of God. How can you measure the love of God? How can you measure the wisdom of God? Even Challenger Deep has measure. It's over 36,000 feet. But infinite Spirit cannot be grasped by us, or by me. Did this effect Jesus' thinking? Could we ever know?

What does it do to a person to have the Spirit without measure?

Macy: You're taking the pronoun "He" as referring to God giving the Spirit to Jesus.

Rod: Yes. "God" is the noun most near the word "he" in the text so He gives the Spirit without measure. Jesus gives the Spirit to others without measure. Yes, that's how I'm taking it. That's one of the reasons I read those different translations; because I understand there can be some debate on the "He" part ... who does the "He" refer to?

Carole: To me, in the play in my mind, He gives the fullness of the Spirit. God gives the fullness, and the Holy Spirit Himself knows how much each person can handle; where they are in that stage of their life.

Rod: Well, that may be true. I am not going to argue about that. I guess what I would question is, “what does *any* measure of the Spirit mean”? Whether it’s fullness of the Spirit or half full of the spirit, or a quarter full of the Spirit; if John the baptist is speaking here of the Spirit, in this case, without measure, what in the world could that possibly mean?

I mean, I tend to look at it as “you have the Spirit” or “you don’t have the Spirit”. Since we are finite beings ... you know, this is **all** of me. This is it. We even say it; “What you see is what you get”. Unless I gain more weight ... this is me.

But, what is the fullness of the Spirit?

Carole: But as you mature, from graduating college to today {with all your experiences} you have matured in the Spirit so you’re getting more fullness...

Rod: I understand that, but the question is whether or not, I have more Spirit or whether I’ve just learned more or grown more.

Sue: Something I have been thinking about this week is that I haven’t always understood, (and I’m still trying to understand) the work of the Spirit. I know for years and years I did not take advantage of what the Spirit has been offering me. So, I *had* it without measure, but I wasn’t taking advantage of it because I hadn’t understood it.

Rod: Okay.

Jean: The apostles also had the Holy Spirit, but after they had it they prayed *for* the Holy Spirit. So there are two different ways of having it.

Rod: That’s true. Yes, there are a lot of curious things about the Spirit. I’m running into a lot of curious things to try to find some consistency in the way it is spoken of.

So, perhaps the only real parallel for me is to acknowledge that my relationship with the Father and the Spirit is through Jesus who has complete unity with them, and He brings me into the circle because of His sacrifice. In other words, if Jesus has the Spirit without limit, and has the unique relationship with the Father that he obviously has (He’s the only One who has ever seen God and so forth), then the only way I can ever experience that for me is to be brought into the circle by Jesus. Jesus is the means by which I am brought into that same relationship with the Father and the Spirit, through His sacrifice.

However, there *are* places in the Bible where it talks about folks who were not necessarily ‘saved folks’ who had some measure of the Spirit; who had some *relationship* with the Spirit. The Spirit *moved* them in certain ways. Another thing I have observed so far is, as in the 70 elders in the *Old Testament* who received the Spirit of God and prophesied in **Numbers 11:16-17**. “Bring me seventy of Israel’s elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. Have them come to the tent of meeting that they may stand there with you. ¹⁷ I will come down and speak with you there, and **I will take some of the power of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them.** They will share the burden of the people with you so that you will not have to carry it alone.”

God told Moses that He would put some of the Spirit that was on Moses and put it on the 70 elders and then they prophesied. Then they turned around and began to rebel against God. *They were the very ones who, when they sent the men over to land of Canaan to spy out the land, they along with others said “we can’t do this”.* In **Numbers 13:28-29** it says that “the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. ²⁹ The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan.”

³¹ *“We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are.”*
So these elders rebelled against God.

In the *New Testament*, the church that seemed to have the ‘most’ of the Spirit (more measure of the Spirit, if you will) was the Church in Corinth and they were the most messed up church in the New Testament. Having the spirit *in great measure* is not an insurance against great sin to accompany or be a part of that person’s life.

Macy: I love the picture of the Spirit being air because I feel like air is diverse anyway. Put it in an oxygen tank and compress it; give it measure, and it’s a thing that is uncontainable. It can be harnessed for good or it can ‘not’ be harnessed for good. If you have it just by itself, it’s very combustible. It has so many potentialities with it. It needs containment, or guidance of a sort. And that makes me think of the Holy Spirit in a way. It’s from Christ and God but if you divorce it from Christ and God it could become a liability of sorts.

Rod: Yes. I understand. And I like this thing about being able to take air or oxygen and compress it and it’s useful in that form, but it could blow your head off if you’re not careful. You don’t light a match around it.

Ruth: In **John 16:7** it says, “But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.”

Rod: That’s true

Ruth: So if Jesus is on the Earth, the counselor is not here.

Rod: Well, let’s be careful about that.

Ruth: It says you can’t have Him unless I go away. When I go away I’ll send Him.

Rod: I understand but let’s be careful about that. That’s what we’re struggling with. That may mean something else beside just “He’s not here.” He’s been here since the second verse in the Old Testament and He is found throughout the Old Testament.

Ruth: Maybe there is a different form of Him that came after Jesus’ sacrifice.

Rod: That’s what we’re struggling with here. It’s the form, the measure, the size ... how do we appropriate ...

Ruth: In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit was not in everybody. It was only select people who got the Spirit. And yet Christians, all of them, are supposed to be given the gift of the Holy Spirit. But *also*, John the baptist said you had to be baptized in the Spirit by Jesus, so people, after Jesus sacrifice had the baptism available to them if it had to do with the counselor; that He can't come until I'm gone.

Rod: Well, again ... I'm working on that. I'll let you know after I sort all that out.

Ruth: There were people who listened to the Spirit in the Old Testament and people who *wouldn't* listen to Him.

Rod: But there were also people who *had* the Spirit; and even David prayed that God would not take the Holy Spirit away from him in **Palm 51:11**. "[Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.](#)" So while David had the Holy Spirit of God, he was committing adultery and killing Bathsheba's husband.

Jean: There is a scripture that says, "[And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption](#)" in **Ephesians 4:30**.

Rod: In fact, there is Scripture in the Old Testament where the Holy Spirit is grieved.

We're not going to work out all the issues tonight on the Holy Spirit. But we have to grapple with this issue of what is having the Holy Spirit without limit. And if we're just talking about it in the life of Jesus, then that is kind of what the focus is for this. But if I am going to experience, in some way, the filling of the Spirit or to have connection with the Spirit, at least in the New Testament teaching, there has to be *Jesus bringing me into* that experience.

As Peter says in **2 Peter 1:4**, I get to participate in the divine nature through the knowledge of Jesus. This intimacy that we have is like a bride being married into the family, a baby born again into the family, through birth and marriage to be a part of this family of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and with all others who share in this amazing gift of eternal life.

And so it is through this birth that I come into it; it is through this marriage that I come into it; and *because* of it I get to experience all the things that it means to be a participant within the *divine nature*. But it's all through Jesus. So, for now, I must listen and understand the words of God spoken by Jesus so that I may have the mind of Christ. In other words, this idea of the Spirit without limit is for now, maybe something that is unattainable for me and you. (I'm talking about the Spirit without limit. I'm not talking about not having the Spirit, but the Spirit without limit is unattainable.) But I get to *participate* in it. I get to have some kind of experience with it through Jesus Himself and His inviting me into it.

I may have raised more questions and muddied the water a lot, but join my world because these things muddy my waters when I read about this. That's why I say it's deep. But it works well with the Challenger Deep metaphor because the closer you get down to the bottom the more murky the waters can get; particularly when you stir them up and all that silt that has been laying on the bottom is stirred up. It does get muddy.

Point # 9: The Father loves the son and has given all things into His hand.

Remember that John the baptist is making a distinction between himself and Jesus. The increased popularity of Jesus was appropriate because of these **points** being made by John. **John 3:35** says, “The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.”

Remember John the baptist makes the statement that ‘I am not the Christ. I will decrease and He will increase.’ Part of that is that **God puts all things into the hands of Jesus**. The nature of Jesus’ relationship with His Father is a Father / Son love relationship. No greater truth is taught by Jesus. It is Jesus who introduces this concept in its most complete form. It is not stressed in the Old Testament. Jesus modeled this relationship consistently throughout His sojourn.

Of course, the word for “love” here is agape (αγαπω). The unconditional, self-giving love is the highest form of love. It is the testimony. It is this testimony that so disturbed the Jewish leaders. The Jewish leaders were so disturbed by this idea of Jesus claiming that God was His Father they called it blasphemy! When He would talk about the intimacy of a relationship with His Father, God; it blew the mind of the Jews. They could not handle that concept.

But here is John the baptist who is saying that the Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hands. Now I want you to take that at face value. If a Jew is hearing that; and here is Jehovah God, the God of the Universe, the God who created all things, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Moses and David, and all these great wonders that He did in the Old Testament, and now it says that the Father loves Jesus and He gives **everything** into His hands. And here’s Jesus standing there very much like any plain old common man; like everybody else, and what is everybody going to think about that? The God of the universe is turning everything over to Him?

Now, I know he may be pretty special. He has done a lot of great miracles. You know, He has a lot of nice words (although even at this point He hasn’t said much; He hasn’t talked very much); but how are they going to take that; that the God of the Universe saying, “I’m going to hand everything over to Him!”

Carole: Worship God only. And later on when Jesus says, “I and the Father are one” that is **blasphemy** because He is making Himself **equal** to God. John is saying that this guy is higher than the rest of us; the rest of the world. Are you making Him like a God? I mean, it is blasphemy to the Jewish mind for Him to claim; for **Jesus** to claim that ‘the Father and I are one’; and for John to say that God has given everything into Jesus’ hands ... who do they think He is, God?

Brenda: Not only did He call God his Father, but he called Him Abba, which is like our saying “daddy”. That is the name that is used only for someone who is intimate.

Rod: Yes. He had a very special, intimate relationship with the Father. And it wasn’t just that he introduced the ‘concept’ of it. It was that He claimed this special, personal, unique relationship ... the **only-begotten** son of the Father.

Ruth: Was there a prophecy that God would send ‘His son’?

Rod: Do you mean in the terminology of “son”? John first introduced Him as the ‘lamb’ of God. I’d have to do a little research on this but yes.

Macy: In **Psalm 2:7** it says, “He said to me, “**You are my son; today I have become your father.**” In verse **12** it says, “**Kiss his son**, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction...

Psalm 2

“Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain?

² The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, ³ “Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.”

⁴ The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. ⁵ He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, ⁶ “I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.”

⁷ I will proclaim the Lord’s decree:

He said to me, “You are my son; today I have become your father. ⁸ Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. ⁹ You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.”

¹⁰ Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. ¹¹ Serve the Lord with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling. ¹² **Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction**, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”

Rod: Kiss the son lest you die” is taken as Messianic. **Psalm 2** is Messianic. It is quoted in the book of **Hebrews 1:5** as a direct reference to Jesus.

Genesis 18:18 Messiah to be a son of Abraham

18 Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him.

2 Samuel 7:12-14 is quoted in Hebrews 1

¹² When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, **I will raise up your offspring** to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

¹⁴ **I will be his father, and he will be my son.** When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands.

Isaiah 9:6 says For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 11 is Messianic He will be a son of David

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

Macy: It seems that it wasn't common knowledge that He was born in Bethlehem either. Jesus came from Nazareth. That part of the story wasn't widely known.

In **John 5:18** says, "For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God." Not only are the leaders complaining about Him breaking the Sabbath but He also called God His Father making Himself equal to God. This special relationship was hard for them to grasp.

But Jesus' entire purpose was wrapped up in revealing the Father who He alone knew. They saw the implication; *equality with God*. They understood that if you claim that God is your Father, you are claiming some equality with God.

This love also brought forth this giving. It always does. Love always brings about giving. In fact, you can't have love without giving. But this was no ordinary gift ... *all things into His hands*. God loved Him and He gave Him something; **everything** into His hands. Later, Jesus' word says to His Father, "*Into your hands I commit my Spirit*" (**Luke 23:46**). I just think of the interesting twist here; God puts everything into Jesus' hands and when Jesus finally dies, what does He do? He puts Himself into God's hands.

Can we possibly understand the "*all things*" of this statement? It says God put *all things* into His hands, so what in the world is the "*all things*"? John has just told us Jesus has the spirit without limit; without measure. Now we are told that God has put *all things* into His hands.

In **Matthew 28:18** it says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

John 1:3 says, "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."

John 1:14 says, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, **full of grace and truth**." So He is filled with all grace and truth

In **John 3:27** John the baptist recognized that "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven."

In **John 5:22**, Jesus said, "He has given all judgment to the Son". The Father has given all judgment to the Son.

In **John 5:26** the Son was given life in Himself and authority to execute judgment. John writes, "For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment".

In **John 6:37, 39** and following we see that God gives souls to Jesus. "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.... that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day."

A complete inventory of what was given to Jesus would be a good study so I encourage you to do that. What were all in the list of things that were put into Jesus' hands ... all authority; all judgment; all things.

But Jesus is completely aware that, due to the love of His Father, He was the receiver of these things. It is a result of the love of the Father that Jesus receives these things. The mind of Christ understood, in emptying Himself, he was now dependent on the gifts granted by the Father, as are we.

Just think: Here's Jesus, who **empties** Himself, so He has **no** authority, He is lying in a manger, He has **no** judgment, **no** anything. He **can't even** change His own diaper. And anything He is going to receive in the course of His life here on earth, He will receive from His Father. It is going to be given to Him. So, Jesus has this "sonship" thing down. He has the understanding of what it means to be a Son or a daughter of God. And we can learn that by the way Jesus understood His Sonship, while on earth, with the Father. It is the Father **giving** to Him, **conferring** upon Him. That is how it happens here. It is not us doing something, somehow to get these things. They are gifts; gifts from the Father.

Point # 10: ³⁶ **He who believes on the Son has everlasting life; he who does not perishes.**

["He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."](#) NASB

Just a side note here: When you read these 10 statements or points of John the baptist in the latter part of John chapter 3, there is a lot of great theology in the statements. For people who try to make the case that somehow the theology of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John is somehow different from Paul's letters or Peter's letters, etc. that is impossible. One of the studies that I've always thought about doing but haven't actually done it, is to go through the words of Jesus and pull out concepts, and then go over to the letters and show how these very concepts are fleshed out in the letters, sometimes using **exactly the same words** that Jesus used, and they're fleshed out over here. You could lay them side-by-side to show the complete, absolute unity between the words of Jesus and the words of the Apostles, because some people try to pit them against one another, and that's sad.

Point # 10 says that life is in the Son. The only escape from the wrath of God is **life in the Son**. We have been told by the Apostles that "in Him was life and that life was the light of men" in **John 1:4**. Jesus also has told us that those who believe have eternal life and will not perish in **John 3:15 and 3:36**.

We have gotten a very small taste of the wrath of God in Jesus' driving out the merchandisers from the temple. This sharp contrast between eternal life and the wrath of God was **crystal clear** for Jesus. He **knew** it was one or the other. There is no middle ground here. It is either **eternal life** or **wrath of God**. There's no middle ground.

As Paul said in **Romans 1:18**, ["For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness; because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God has made it known."](#)

Without Christ we are objects of wrath. Wrath is God's response to man's rejection of the truth; especially the truth of His Son. The one who does not believe is judged or condemned already because he has *not believed* in the name of the only begotten Son God.

We, without Christ, are already under the sentence of death. The question is, will the sentence be commuted? John the baptist said that the wrath of God abides on (or remains on) the person who does not obey. It **remains** on them. In other words, it is already on them. The "stain" is on them; the "stink" is on them. It remains on them unless they obey.

When John saw the Pharisees and the Sadducees coming for baptism, he said, "You brood of vipers. Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" in **Matthew 3:7** and **Luke 3:7**. In **Matthew 3:10** he tells them that "The axe is already laid at the root of the trees." How can the axe be withdrawn? If it is laid at the root of the trees, how can it be withdrawn? It is by producing the fruit of repentance that the tree can be saved.

There are two corresponding words used here. The two corresponding words are **believe** and **obey**. There is no tension between the two. And, again, in some theological circles there seems to be people creating a tension between "trust" and "obey".

John 3:36 says, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not [j]obey [or believe - πιστεωσ] the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." NASB

Somehow, these people believe it has to be all 'trust', and some people say it's all "obey". They are one and the same.

There was a question about the word "obey" as some translations say "reject".

The word for "obey" is the word (pisteuos) πιστεωσ. The word "obey" here means to disbelieve willfully or perversely, not believing, disobedient, obey not, unbelieving, Disbelieve is the word απειθεω (not believing). It is spoken of disbelievers in Christ and it is of those who are disobedient to the Son. It literally means, "Someone who will not be persuaded." To be disobedient is to be someone who will not be persuaded. Someone who is obedient is a persuaded person. So, there are two different words that are being used in the text here but there is no tension between the two. They, of necessity, go together. Mere belief without obedience is useless and obedience without faith is also useless.

Notice that the obedience is directed to the Son. Jesus will say much about this later in **John 15**. Faith that is not active in doing what Jesus says is no faith at all. We must put His words into practice to avoid the wrath that now rests on us. John the baptist knew that faith was not directed towards him, and that obedience was not due him. Jesus has **exclusive** rights to both. In other words, John the baptist understood that this was exclusive to Jesus. He was the One to be obeyed; He was the One to be believed.

The word translated "not obey" in **John 3:36** is the word apetheo (απειθεω) meaning 'not to be persuaded'. When a salesman gives his pitch for his product, the potential buyer is either persuaded or not? If so, they will 'buy'. If not, the person is unwilling or obstinate.

When Jesus comes and presents His testimony about His Father, and makes it plain where eternal life is found, *one has a decision to make*. If Jesus cannot persuade a person to believe and obey, who can? Can **I** present better arguments? Can **I** speak with greater authority? Can **I** use better illustrations? Should **we** not be making Jesus' case in the same words that Jesus made His case? Each word and phrase used by Jesus was carefully selected by Him and the Holy Spirit to reveal the Father to us and to make known the way of eternal life.

Jesus is the master teacher.

A person may be disobedient to the Son; to God (**Romans 11:30**).

A person may be disobedient to the truth (**Romans 2:8**)

A person may be disobedient to the word (**1 Peter 2:8**)

A person may be disobedient to the Gospel (**1 Peter 4:7**)

With so much at stake, why are so many obstinate? Jesus answered this in **John 3:19**.
“This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.”

People do not want their evil deeds brought into the light. Lack of obedience is an indicator of a stubborn heart whether the disobedience is wholesale or retail. The person who rejects Jesus rejects life. The person who will not obey in a small area of life is *just as stubborn*; just on a smaller scale.

How might disobedience affect Jesus? Is He angry? Is He hurt? Is He indifferent to it? He is *certainly not* indifferent. But what does He *see* in our stubbornness? In other words, when Jesus sees stubbornness ... I mean, I know as a father, the stubbornness in my children, something arose within me. It affected me in certain ways. It could be some anger, or disappointment, or a number of different things, but when I saw this disobedience, the *willful* stubborn disobedience, and seeing that in my children, it *affected* me. I may have even caused me as a human to think, “I'm not doing a very good job” or “What's wrong with my kid”. It affected me in some way. So, the affects it has on others and the seriousness for us in rejecting our only chance of salvation from God's wrath; it has affect, not only on **God**, but it has an effect of *other people*.

Did Jesus, when He came, think everyone would simply obey? When He came down here to the earth and spoke the words of God, did He think everybody would fall in line and simply obey him? Did He have that expectation in mind?

John 2:24-25 said that *He knew what was in man*. So, knowing our hearts; how does Jesus handle rejection since he knows our hearts? Most humans do not handle it very well. I believe He struggles with it just as I do.

Jesus says one cannot see life just as in **John 3:5** he spoke about the person who is not born again cannot see the kingdom of God.

I want to give you 10 words that sum up the 10 points:

Point # 1 is about *Authority* – It is from heaven, it's always a coming down

Point # 2 is about *Identity* – I am not the Christ; He is the Christ

Point # 3 is about *Timing* – Jesus knew that the time was right, a fulfillment of the purpose

Point # 4 is about *Intimacy* – The intimacy between the Bride and the Bridegroom

Point # 5 is about *Destiny* – Jesus knew His destiny from a small beginning to fulfilling all things.

Point # 6 is about *No Equal* – He is above all, He has no equal

Point # 7 is about *Witness* – He testifies of all the things that he sees and knows

Point # 8 is about *Spirit* – Without measure

Point # 9 is about *Father Loves Him* and has given him **all** things

Point # 10 is about *Rescued*; He is rescuing us from the coming wrath

Jesus' thinking, according to this section of Scripture, is about AUTHORITY, IDENTITY, TIMING, INTIMACY, DESTINY, BEING UNEQUALED, TESTIMONY, SPIRIT, LOVED and RESCUED.

If we want to get into the Mind of Christ, we have to understand how He *thought* about these ten things. THAT is what John the baptist is prepping us for. And this is what Jesus is going to flesh out in the rest of His ministry. He will talk about every one of those ten things in the rest of His ministry.

This is a good primer. If you want a good theological primer for the words of Jesus; for the teachings of Jesus; the latter part of John 3 gives you ten points for the thinking of Jesus.