

His Command is Eternal Life; John 12:44-50

I. Unbelief

A. This seems to be the problem for Jesus during His ministry

B. This also seems to be the problem for people in the 21st century

1. John 12:37–40; ³⁷ Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, ³⁸ so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” ³⁹ Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, ⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.”

C. People do not want to believe in Jesus because of what that causes

1. It causes a change in thinking

2. It causes a change in lifestyle

3. It causes a change in priorities

D. Christianity is a complete change in the way you live

E. If you think you can believe and just “add” Jesus to your already outstanding life you are completely wrong

F. You cannot just change you unbelief to belief and be saved

II. Belief

A. This seems to be a problem for the rulers

1. John 12:41–43; ⁴¹ Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. ⁴² Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³ for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

B. Much has been said in commentaries about this word “belief”

1. That it was an intellectual belief, but not a saving trust in Jesus

2. “...a rational conviction,” “...they were convinced in their understanding,” “but they had no true faith in God.”

3. “This complete intellectual faith is really the climax of unbelief.” Bishop Westcott

4. This Greek word, “believed” denotes a completeness of faith

5. John 3:14–16; ¹⁴ **And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,** ¹⁵ **that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.** ¹⁶ **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.**

6. Hebrews 11:6; And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

C. The rulers had a complete faith that is able to save, but John clearly tells us that this complete faith did not save these rulers

D. This word “confess” is the same one used in 1 John 1:9, with a prefix that means “to agree” or “to come together”

1. While they believed that Jesus was the Messiah, they could not openly agree with God in front of the other rulers

2. Their desire for position, power, and glory held their tongues
3. So even with a completeness of faith, they could not enter the kingdom without a public agreement, or confession, of that faith

E. I bring this up because I want us to see what man's theology has done to the word of God

1. Many say that belief is all that is needed
2. Others add that you must ask Jesus into your heart (the sinner's prayer)
3. Then others add that you must be repentant, but stop there, "if you are not repentant then you don't truly believe."
4. Here we clearly see that without an agreement, a confession of Christ, belief does no good
5. Matthew 10:32–33; ³² So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, ³³ but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.
6. Romans 10:9–10; ⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

F. Belief is essential (Hebrews 11:6), but without confession, we are rejecting Jesus

III. Rejection

A. John 12:47–49; ⁴⁷ If anyone hears my words 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 The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. ⁴⁹ For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment— what to say and what to speak.

B. Reject - to set aside, declare invalid

1. The one who sets aside, declares invalid, the words of Christ will be judged by the very words he has set aside, declared invalid.
2. I cannot help but think about Jesus being called "The Word"
3. John 1:1–5; In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
4. Jesus' words, The Word, is life!
5. His word (The Word) is the light that overcomes the darkness
6. Have you ever been in a place where there is no light? No stars or moon, no ambient light from the street lamps, but complete and total darkness
 - a) You can hear the blood rushing through your veins, all your senses are heightened to try and overcome your loss of sight
 - b) The TV show Blackout plays on people's fear of the dark
 - c) Their reaction to even the smallest touch of something they are not sure of is fascinating to watch
7. Even animals that have no eyes have developed ways to "see"

8. Darkness can never overcome light, no matter how dark it is, turn on a flashlight (or any light source) and the darkness is overcome

C. To reject Jesus is to turn off the light and live in total darkness

1. 2 Thessalonians 1:5–9; ⁵ This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering— ⁶ since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, ⁷ and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels ⁸ in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

D. To reject Jesus is eternal destruction

IV. Eternal Life

A. But Jesus' words bring us eternal life

B. His commandment is eternal life

1. John 4:14; **but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**

2. Could you imagine having to go to the well daily to get water for your home?

3. Going to the well to get water every day, or even multiple times a day, could be compared to the daily offerings presented by the levitical priesthood and required by the Law

4. But Jesus is the "Living Water" that you only need once. No other sacrifice is needed for eternal life

5. "drinks of the water I give him" is just another way of saying obey His commandments

C. If eternal destruction is away from the presence of the Lord, then eternal life must start with being in the presence of the Lord

D. Destruction and life are both eternal, something to keep in mind

1. John 17:1–3; When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, **"Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.**

2. "they know" - not just a superficial knowledge of God and Jesus, but a deep abiding relationship

a) Johari Window - a technique used to help people better understand their relationships with themselves and others.

<p>1</p> <p>Known Self</p> <p>Things we know about ourselves and others know about us</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Hidden Self</p> <p>Things we know about ourselves that others do not know</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Blind Self</p> <p>Things others know about us that we do not know</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Unknown Self</p> <p>Things neither we nor others know about us</p>

b)

c)The more we let people know the hidden self, the more we learn about the blind self, the more the unknown self becomes known

d)All this leads to deeper relationships with each other; we KNOW each other more deeply

e)This is the kind of relationship we should strive for with Jesus

E.To know Jesus is to understand His sacrifice, once for all, was for us... so that we could know eternal life not eternal destruction

F.To know Jesus is to understand that His commands are not burdensome

G.To know Jesus is to understand that His commands are eternal life!

V.Know God Through Jesus

A.More than just a belief

B.An obedient faith

C.That leads to eternal life