



BAPTIST CHURCH

## The Book of John

### “Spiritual Awareness”

### John 18:28-32

#### Introduction

Today and for the next few weeks we are going to finish our walk through the Book of John.

**John 20:31** declares the purpose of the Book of John: “But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.” CSB

The Context of **John chapters 18-20** is this: Jesus experienced the most brutal sequence of events in the history of the world. Judas betrayed Jesus. Jesus was arrested, His closest followers deserted Him and Peter, three separate times, denied that he knew Jesus. Jesus was falsely accused, mistreated, spit on, cursed, mocked and beaten beyond recognition.

Barabbas, a convicted criminal, was set free and Jesus was sentenced to be executed by death on the cross. Jesus was taken to Golgotha (the place of the skull) was nailed to the cross, there He suffered and died for the sins of the entire world.

As we conclude our examination of the Book of John we will focus on a few simple but profound observations regarding the suffering, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

#### Scripture

“Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the governor’s headquarters. It was early morning. **They did not enter the headquarters themselves; otherwise they would be defiled and unable to eat the Passover.** 29 So Pilate came out to them and said, “What charge do you bring against this

man?” 30 They answered him, “If this man weren’t a criminal, we wouldn’t have handed him over to you.” 31 Pilate told them, “You take him and judge him according to your law.” “It’s not legal for us to put anyone to death,” the Jews declared. 32 They said this so that Jesus’s words might be fulfilled indicating what kind of death he was going to die.” CSB

## Quote of the day

“When we speak about wisdom, we are speaking about Christ. When we speak about virtue, we are speaking about Christ. When we speak about justice, we are speaking about Christ. When we speak about peace, we are speaking about Christ. When we speak about truth and life and redemption, we are speaking about Christ.” — Ambrose of Milan

After Peter denied Jesus for the third time Jesus entered into, as I have already said, the most extreme and brutal sequence of events in the history of the world.

From these events there are a few simple but profound observations we must consider.

## Observation One

### Spiritual Awareness Matters vv.18:28

“Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the governor’s headquarters. It was early morning. **They did not enter the headquarters themselves; otherwise they would be defiled and unable to eat the Passover.** CSB

**Spiritual Awareness** is the ability to recognize and respond to the presence and activity of God in our everyday life.

**Spiritual Awareness** is perceiving the wisdom of God, His guidance, His conviction, His calling and His work in our lives— Aligning our thoughts and choices with His Word and His Will.

The Jewish elite, beginning with the High Priest and other Jewish leaders as well as many of the people did not see or understand what was really going on.

They were in the presence of the Messiah, the Son of the Living God and they perceived Him as a threat to their religion, traditions and way of life.

They were void of any **Spiritual Awareness**: They did not want to defile themselves because they wanted to observe the Passover Meal.

Meanwhile they became crazed and worked themselves into a frenzy because they wanted to Kill Jesus the true "Passover Lamb."

#### **Four Results for those who live without Spiritual Awareness:**

Without Spiritual Awareness:

- 1. We become blind to the truth**
- 2. We follow our Fanatic and Feeble Emotions**
- 3. Good becomes evil and evil becomes good**
- 4. The approval of others becomes more important than the righteousness of God.**

Without Spiritual Awareness:

- 1. We become blind to the truth—** We exchange the truth of God for a lie.

The High Priest, the religious elite and many of the Pharisees were more interested in the tradition of eating the Passover Meal rather than realizing Jesus was the Messiah, the true Passover Lamb.

Satan is a liar, a deceiver, and the truth is not in him.

The Apostle Paul warns us about being blind to righteousness and exchanging the truth of God for a lie.

**Romans 1:18-32** “For God’s wrath is revealed from heaven against all godlessness and unrighteousness of people **who by their**

**unrighteousness suppress** (*Katecho— to hold down, to restrain, to prevent, to cause to be ineffective*) **the truth,** 19 since what can be

known about God is evident among them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For His invisible attributes, that is, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood through what He has made. As a result, people are without excuse. 21 For though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or show gratitude. Instead, their thinking became worthless, and their senseless hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man, birds, four-footed animals, and reptiles.

24 Therefore God delivered them over in the desires of their hearts to sexual impurity, so that their bodies were degraded among themselves.

25 **They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served what has been created instead of the Creator,** who is praised forever. Amen. 26 For this reason (Because of their Suppressing the Truth and subsequent Spiritual Blindness) God delivered them over to disgraceful passions. Their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. 27 The men in the same way also left natural relations with women and were inflamed in their lust for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the appropriate penalty of their error. 28 And because they did not think it worthwhile to acknowledge God, God delivered them over to a corrupt mind so that they do what is not right. 29 They are filled with all unrighteousness, evil, greed, and wickedness. They are full of envy, murder, quarrels, deceit, and malice. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, God-haters, arrogant, proud, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 senseless, untrustworthy, unloving,, and unmerciful. 32 Although they know God’s just sentence— that those who practice such things deserve to die, —they not only do them, but even applaud, others who practice them.” CSB

Because of Spiritual Blindness many people have compromised the truth of Scripture, rationalized sinful behavior and have rejected the truth of God’s Word— and now in our culture if we take a stand on the principles of God’s

Word we are call intolerant, judgmental, close minded and unwilling to understand that times have changed!

The times may have changed but the Word of God will never change.

**Psalm 119:160** “The entirety of your word is truth, each of your righteous judgments endures forever.” CSB

### **Jesus warns us about the lack of Spiritual Awareness:**

**Luke 17:26-30** “Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man: 27 People went on eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage until the day Noah boarded the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 It will be the same as it was in the days of Lot: People went on eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building. 29 But on the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 It will be like that on the day the Son of Man is revealed.” CSB

**Matthew 24:43-44** “But know this: If the homeowner had known what time the thief was coming, he would have stayed alert and not let his house be broken into. 44 This is why you are also to be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” CSB

### **The Apostle Paul speaks of the lack of Spiritual Awareness in the Last Days:**

**2 Timothy 3:5** “But know this: Hard times will come in the last days. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, proud, demeaning, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, without love for what is good, 4 traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 holding to the form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid these people.” CSB

**Without Spiritual Awareness We become blind to the truth— We exchange the truth of God for a lie.**

## Four Results for those who live without Spiritual Awareness:

Without Spiritual Awareness:

**2. We follow our Fanatic and Feeble Emotions**— Foolish words have serious consequences.

**Fanatic**— A person with an obsessive interest in a particular belief or activity.

**Feeble**— A person who displays weakness or character of will.

Matthew's version of events records what happened from his perspective:

**Matthew 27:22-26** "Pilate asked them, "What should I do then with Jesus, who is called Christ?" They all answered, "Crucify him!" 23 Then he said, "Why? What has he done wrong?" But they kept shouting all the more, "Crucify him!" 24 When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that a riot was starting instead, he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, "I am innocent of this man's blood. See to it yourselves!" 25 **All the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!"** 26 Then he released Barabbas to them and, after having Jesus flogged, handed him over to be crucified." CSB

In a moment of emotional chaos, the crowd was provoked into a frenzy and they began to shout "**His blood— the blood of Jesus, be on us and on our children.**"

The destruction of Jerusalem was a curse that fell upon the next generation **of those who foolishly proclaimed "Let His blood be upon us and upon our children."**

In 70 AD the Romans, after several months of siege against Jerusalem, they breached the city walls. When the Roman Imperial legion broke down the walls of Jerusalem they attacked without mercy. They set Jerusalem on fire and burned the temple to the ground. Through the screams of horror, the smell of blood and ash, the sound of the city collapsing under the brute

force of the Roman military and the slaughter of many in Jerusalem— Jerusalem was conquered.

When the siege was over, Jerusalem the holy city, was a smoke blackened char of rubble and dead bodies. The stench of death was in the air— Josephus the historian recorded the blood, of more than one million people were slaughtered, ran through the streets of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was decimated, the temple was destroyed, the treasures of the city and the temple were looted and taken away.

**Spiritual Blindness not only has an effect upon our life now it has the potential to ripple and echo into the future deceiving and causing destruction for generations to come.**

Jesus said this to His disciples before He warned them about the lack of Spiritual Awareness— **Luke 17:1-2** “He said to his disciples, “Offenses will certainly come, but woe to the one through whom they come! 2 It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to stumble.” CSB

**Parents live with Spiritual Awareness—** How you love and lead your children will ripple and echo down through the generations that follow after you.

**Without Spiritual Awareness We follow our Fanatic and Feeble Emotions— Foolish words have serious consequences.**

**Four Results for those who live without Spiritual Awareness:**

Without Spiritual Awareness:

### **3. Good becomes evil and evil becomes good**

Many Pharisees because of their pride, jealousy, institutional traditions and lack of faith declared Jesus a false prophet, a blasphemer, a law breaker, an imposter, he was called “A Samaritan” which was a racial slur in first-

century Jerusalem and he was even given the title of beelzebub the prince of demons.

**Isaiah 5:20-25** “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness, who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. 21 Woe to those who consider themselves wise and judge themselves clever. 22 Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, who are champions at pouring beer, 23 who acquit the guilty for a bribe and deprive the innocent of justice. 24 Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes straw and as dry grass shrivels in the flame, so their roots will become like something rotten and their blossoms will blow away like dust, for they have rejected the instruction of the LORD of Armies, and they have despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. 25 Therefore the LORD’s anger burned against his people. He raised his hand against them and struck them; the mountains quaked, and their corpses were like garbage in the streets. In all this, his anger has not turned away, and his hand is still raised to strike. CSB

**Without Spiritual Awareness Good becomes evil and evil becomes good.**

**Four Results for those who live without Spiritual Awareness:**

Without Spiritual Awareness:

**4. The approval of others becomes more important than the righteousness of God.**

**John 19:15-16** “They shouted, “Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Should I crucify your king?” “We have no king but Caesar!” the chief priests answered. 16 Then he handed him over to be crucified.

Many of the Pharisees who had earlier praised Jesus for His Miracles, His Message and His Ministry, were the same ones screaming in the streets “Crucify Him, Crucify Him.”

Following the crowd can seem like the right thing to do. However, in a world that is broken and not getting better, following the crowd can lead to deception, rejection of Jesus and death.

**Luke 12:4-5** “I say to you, my friends, don’t fear those who kill the body, and after that can do nothing more. 5 But I will show you the one to fear: Fear him who has authority to throw people into hell after death. Yes, I say to you, this is the one to fear!” CSB

**Proverbs 14:15-17** “The inexperienced one believes anything, but the sensible one watches his steps. 16 A wise person is cautious and turns from evil, but a fool is easily angered and is careless. 17 A quick-tempered person acts foolishly, and one who schemes is hated.

Without Spiritual Awareness:

**We become blind to the truth**

**We follow our Fanatic and Feeble Emotions**

**Good becomes evil and evil becomes good**

**The approval of others becomes more important than the righteousness of God.**

As I bring the message to a close I want to share—

## **Six Steps We Can Take To Help Us Establish And Maintain Spiritual Awareness**

### **1. Read and Meditate on the Scripture**

**Psalms 119:105-106** “Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path. 106 I have solemnly sworn to keep your righteous judgments.” CSB

### **2. Watch and Pray**

**Matthew 26:41** “Watch— stay awake, be alert— and pray, so that you won’t enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” CSB

### 3. Confess and Repent of Sin

**I John 1:8-9** “If we say, “We have no sin,” we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

### 4. Establish and Maintain Christian Relationships

**Acts 2:41-47** “So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added to them. 42 They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. 44 Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. 45 They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” CSB

Followers of Christ in the first church are the greatest example of what it looks like to establish and maintain Christian Relationships:

They studied the Word of God together  
They hung out with each other— fellowship  
They ate together  
They prayed together  
They served together  
They worshiped together  
They enjoyed the blessings of God together

### 5. Pursue Holiness

**I Peter 1:15-16** “But as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct; 16 for it is written, Be holy, because I am holy.” CSB

**Galatians 5:19-25** “Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, 21 envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar. I am warning you about these things—as I warned you before—that **those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.** 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things. 24 **Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.** 25 **If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.**” CSB

## 6. Live on Mission

**Matthew 5:16** “. . . let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” CSB