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## **“Who Are You?”**

### **JOHN 8:21-30**

#### **Introduction**

1. Whenever you or I meet someone for the first time, there are several questions we may ask in order to better know the person.
  - a. What is your name?
  - b. Where do you live, or where are you from?
  - c. Who are you related to (i.e., your father and mother, grandparents, aunts & uncles, siblings)?
2. As you and I read through the eighth chapter of John’s gospel, we encounter many of these same questions, either asked outright or implied by Jesus’ answers:
  - a. “Where is your Father?” (8:19).
  - b. “Who are you?” (8:25)
  - c. Where Jesus is from (vv. 23, 26, 29).
  - d. Where He is going (vv. 21-22, 28).
  - e. Who His Father is (vv. 26-27, 38, 54-55).
3. Earlier, in John 7:34-35, Jesus had said to them, “You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come.”
4. This prompted them to think that He might be going to the Gentiles.
5. When Jesus said it again, in John 8:21, they questioned whether or not Jesus was contemplating suicide, “Surely He will not kill Himself, will He, since He says, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come’?”

6. It is Jesus' response to this speculation on their part (vv. 25-26) and another statement which He makes in verse 28 that I want us to examine in our lesson tonight.
7. From these I hope to encourage our thinking about who we are.

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## **I. Of This World or Not Of This World**

“You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world”

(John 8:23).

### **A. JESUS IS “NOT OF THIS WORLD”**

1. World (*Kosmos*)
  - a. Matthew, Mark & Luke use the term a total of 20 times in their combined gospels.
  - b. John utilizes it a total of 78 times in his gospel, almost 4 times as much as the other gospels combined.
2. Typically, in John's gospel and his later epistles it represents that which is
  - a. Changing, transient, temporal
  - b. Opposed to all that is of God
3. Jesus is not of the world in the sense that . . .
  - a. He is eternal (John 1:2; Colossians 1:17)

“He was in the beginning with God” (John 1:2).

“He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together” (Colossians 1:17).
  - b. He is the beginning and the end (Revelation 1:8; 22:13).

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”” (Revelation 1:8)

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” (Revelation 22:13)

- c. He came from heaven into the world (John 8:23; 1:9).

“I am from above” (John 8:23).

“There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man” (John 1:9).

- d. He was sent by His Father into the world.

“For God did not send the Son into the world to judge (condemn) the world, but that the world might be saved through Him” (John 3:17).

“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” (John 6:38)

“. . . for I proceeded forth and have come from God” (John 8:42).

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## **B. THIS WORLD OWES ITS EXISTENCE TO HIM**

1. Though Jesus is not of the world, the physical world, as we know it, owes its existence to Him.
2. “All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being” (John 1:3).
3. “For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him” (Colossians 1:16).

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## **C. THIS WORLD IS THE OBJECT OF GOD’S LOVE**

1. God so love the world that He sent His Son as its Savior (John 3:16).

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

2. God has never abandoned the world — He has never walked away from it.
3. It continues to be the object of His love and the recipient of His greatest gift.

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## **II. The World's Problem and Its Remedy**

### **A. SOMETHING IS WRONG**

1. There is a blindness in the world:
  - a. In John 1:10, John wrote that even though Jesus came into the very world which He had made, it “did not know Him.”
  - b. Not only that, but He also came to the very people who were supposedly His people — Israel — and they “did not receive Him” (John 1:11).
2. Because of the world does not see Christ or know Him, it cannot receive “the Spirit of truth” (John 14:17).
3. Sadly, the world does not know God (John 17:25).

“the world has not known You” (John 17:25).
4. There is a hostility toward God by the world because of whom the world is most acquainted:
  - a. “The ruler of this world” (John 14:30; 16:11)

“I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me” (John 14:30).
  - b. “The evil one” (1 John 5:19)

“The whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (2 John 5:19).
5. The world hates Christ because He testifies that its deeds are evil (John 7:7).
6. Simply put, the world is not what it was meant to be. Something has gone

wrong. That something is sin.

7. Sin has . . .
  - a. separated the world from God.
  - b. blinded it to God.
  - c. made the world hostile toward God.

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### **B. THE REMEDY — CHRIST**

1. He brings . . .
  - a. forgiveness and cleansing of sin

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:7)
  - b. strength and grace for men and women to live as they ought
    - 1) It is in the Lord and “the strength of His might” that true strength is found (Ephesians 6:10).
    - 2) He makes it possible for those who no longer want to be separated from God to “draw near with confidence with confidence to the throne of grace,” in order to “receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).
  - c. peace in the midst of chaos (Philippians 4:6-7)

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6–7)
2. Only He can cure the individual soul and the soul of the world.
3. However, like any other cure, it can be refused.
4. It is only effective if it is accepted.

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### **III. The Power of the Cross**

#### **A. "THEN YOU WILL KNOW THAT I AM HE"**

"When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me" (John 8:28).

1. Jesus' statement, "when you lift up the Son of Man" was a reference to His crucifixion.
2. In Jerusalem, during the week leading up to His crucifixion, Jesus said, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself" (John 12:32).
3. In the next verse, John wrote that Jesus "was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die" (John 12:33).
4. It was the cross which revealed Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).
5. It was a Roman centurion who, at the cross, as he "saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, 'Truly this was the Son of God!'" (Matthew 27:54).
6. It was the apostle Peter who, in his sermon on the day of Pentecost, pointed back to Jesus' crucifixion, and said, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36).

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#### **B. "UNLESS YOU BELIEVE THAT I AM HE, YOU WILL DIE IN YOUR SINS" (v. 24)**

1. Jesus' point to those listening to Him that day was this: If you refuse to believe that I am the Christ, then your unbelief will mushroom to a host of

sins from which you will have no possibility of forgiveness.

2. They must believe that Jesus is “not of this world,” but is “from above.”
3. They must believe that He alone is . . .
  - a. “the bread of life” (*John 6:48*).
  - b. “the Light of the world” (*John 8:12*).
  - c. “the good shepherd” (*John 10:11*).
  - d. “the resurrection and the life” (*John 11:25*).
  - e. “the way, the truth and the life” (*John 14:6*) — that no one has access to the Father, but through Him.
4. Only One who is not of this world can give to us that which this world cannot.
5. To refuse to believe in Him is to leave ourselves with no forgiveness of our sins, no strength for our souls and no peace within.

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## **Conclusion**

1. John concludes this section in verse 30 with these words, “As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.”
2. Do you believe that Jesus is who He professed Himself to be?
3. Are you willing to come to Him in obedient faith?
4. Realize, “there is salvation in no one else” (*Acts 4:12*).
5. Will you come to Jesus tonight?