

See His Glory
John 2:12-25
Pastor John Miller

In this section we're going to see three aspects of His glory. We're going to see the glory of His passion, the glory of His power, and the glory of His perception as Jesus knows the hearts of all. Now, I want to back up to verse 11. John says, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory," there's our theme for tonight's message, "and his disciples believed on him." You have really the themes there in verse 11, the glory of Jesus, behold your God, and the fact that they responded by believing when they saw His miracles.

The miracle that we just read about in John 2:1-11, is the miracle of the turning of water into wine. That was a miracle that only God could perform, so it speaks of His deity. John sets forth seven signs. Now, the word "miracle" in verse 11 is the idea of a sign, and a sign is pointing to something. It's an indication of something. It's pointing to the deity of Jesus Christ. So these seven miracles, the first one was the water turned to wine, and we saw His glory, His majesty, and His deity.

A very important distinction beginning in verse 12, we have the official start of the public ministry of Jesus Christ. In this twelfth verse, Jesus now moves down into Judea, specifically Jerusalem, and He's going to cleanse the temple, which is the beginning of His public ministry. Beginning in verse 12, down to verse 17, we see His passion, His zeal for His Father's house. Follow with me as I read. "After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days. 13 And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, 14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: 15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; 16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. 17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." That's a reference to Psalm 69:9. It's a messianic prophecy from the Psalms.

Now, go back with me to verse 12. "After this he went down to Capernaum," so He was in the area of Cana of Galilee, up in the north end of the Sea of Galilee, and He's coming down Lake Galilee on the western shore down to the area known as Capernaum. Capernaum in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the synoptic gospels, is the headquarters and base of operation for Jesus' ministry. He would go off from there, but it was the center and the focus of His life and ministry and actually where you might kind of say He made His headquarters, in Capernaum.

You can visit Capernaum on a tour to Israel. It's a beautiful spot, and it was the home of Simon Peter as well. Capernaum is the town where Jesus did all of so many marvelous and powerful miracles, yet they didn't repent and wouldn't believe. It's where Jesus said, "Woe unto thee, Capernaum, for if the works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes a long time ago." The idea is that to whom much

is given, much is required. Can you imagine the Son of God comes and makes His headquarters in your town, He performs these miracles, He's preaching the gospel, but their hearts were hard and their eyes were blinded. They didn't see or recognize or understand who He was. It's really a principle that's found in the Scripture as to whom much is given, much is required.

God has blessed us in America, has He not? We have all of this gospel preaching going on. We have Bibles galore. We have churches on every corner, yet so often we have turned our backs upon God. Certainly God is going to bring judgment upon American for his sin. Billy Graham, years ago, said, "If God doesn't judge America for its sin, He owes Sodom and Gomorrah an apology." How true that is. We need to make sure that we get right with God and respond to the light that we have received.

Jesus moves to Capernaum. He went there (an interesting little note, I want you to see it in verse 12) with His mother. Remember I mentioned that in John's gospel, she's never called Mary, she's called His mother. When Jesus is hanging on the cross, again, He addresses her, "Woman," and commits her care to John. He goes down there with, "...his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples." It's interesting because at this point He's just beginning His public ministry but still hanging out with His family. He's still hanging out with His mother. He's still hanging out with, it says, "his brethren," but there's an interesting omission here. There is no mention of Joseph and no mention of His sisters. It's possible that His legal father, not His Father in heaven, had died. He wasn't around at the wedding at Cana, and maybe His sisters had been married and had gone off and had their own homes. At this point, He's still traveling with His mother, brothers, and disciples. They came to this place called Capernaum and tarried there for many days.

Verse 13 says, "And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." Jesus began His public ministry, interestingly, at the Passover and ended His ministry at the Passover when He hung on the cross as the Passover Lamb and died for the sins of the world. The Jews had three feasts a year that was mandatory for them to attend in Jerusalem. They were Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacle, so the Feast of Sukkot or Booths. These are the three feasts. This is one of the annual feasts that they had to celebrate and probably the greatest and most important.

Passover is a celebration of when they were in bondage in Egypt and God brought the plagues upon the Egyptians. The last plague that God brought upon the Egyptians was when the angel of death came into the land. The homes of the Egyptians where the blood of the lamb had not been applied to the doorposts and the crossbar, the lintel at the door, the firstborn in those homes died. In the homes where the blood of the lamb was applied by the Jewish families, the angel of death passed over those homes, and the firstborn in that home was not murdered or put to death. The significance is that Jesus is the Passover Lamb. The lamb was a type or a picture of Jesus Christ who would die on the cross for our sins so that God's wrath would pass over us. This was a picture that was pointing to a future fulfillment in the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross. It was at the Passover in Jerusalem that Jesus went and was going to

publicly begin His ministry, so He went up to Jerusalem. You're always going up to Jerusalem because it's on a mountain, and from any direction you approach it, you're always ascending to Jerusalem.

Verse 14, "And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting," now, what is going on here? At the Passover, when you came, you had to offer a lamb. You also had to pay a temple tax. It was mandatory. It began very innocently, years earlier they would actually help the pilgrims that would travel. Many times it was difficult to travel with a lamb or an animal sacrifice. Sometimes the poor people would offer a turtledove, that's why they were selling the doves. When you got to the temple, they made it convenient for people to buy an animal that you could give in sacrifice so you didn't have to travel with that animal; and, if you came from a foreign land, and many times they did come from other outlining areas, then you had to change your money for a special coin that was used to pay the temple tax. I don't know if they thought that outside money had cooties on it or whatever, but it's kind of like leaving an airport and having to change your money (and when you do, you lose money because they take part of your money to change your money).

By the way, a little footnote, the priests that were in charge of running things around the temple, were liberals. They weren't the conservatives. They were the Sadducees—not the Pharisees but the Sadducees. It is sad-you-see when the liberals are leading in the house of God and deny the things of God or the Word of God. Amen? This is what's happening in the world today. We have a lot of liberals that deny the Bible is the inerrant, infallible, inspired Word of God, so they've taken God's Word and merchandise it and turned God's house (and in other gospels it says, "My house shall be called the house of prayer," a place where we come to worship God), "but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Listen to me very carefully. What eventually happened was they began to realize they could make money off these people who need an animal for sacrifice and who need to change their coins for temple currency. When they came to the temple, and if they brought their own lamb to offer up, the priest had to examine the lamb. The lamb had to be without blemish and without spot. In other words, it couldn't have any inherited or acquired defect. You couldn't offer a lamb that was cross-eyed or blind or lame or only had one ear, you know. You couldn't look at your flock and say, "That lamb's messed up. Let's take that one to sacrifice. We don't want to take the good ones, let's take the bad ones," which is what a lot of times people do. Refrigerator broke, "Let's donate it to the church," car blew up and it's no good anymore, "Let's give it to God," you know. Let's give to God what we don't need anymore—rather than giving Him our best, we give Him our worst.

The people would come with a lamb, then they would give it to the priest. The priest would examine it—listen carefully—if you brought your lamb from home, inevitably they would find a flaw with your lamb, but they would be more than happy to direct you over to their lamb table of pre-approved, it's got the stamped pre-approval, they're ready to go, there's no issue there, you can buy one of our lambs. The only problem is, the lamb you have to buy from them is five times the amount of the lamb that you can bring from home. They were ripping off the people.

They were profiting off God's people.

There's nothing wrong with ministries or ministers or churches selling product if the motive and intention of selling that is to get God's Word out. There's a very fine line there, and I've always prayed, as a pastor and as a leader in a church, that we're sensitive to that. We're not here to market or make money. We're here to do ministry. Amen? We're here to get God's Word out. My philosophy has always been to get it out as inexpensively as we can because we're about ministry. We're here to get the Word of God out. Now, we need to pay for costs, we need to pay the bills and those kinds of things, but we don't need to be raking in the dough at people's expense. We're here to give them the Word of God and to make it as available as possible. What a wonderful thing that is. When God's people's hearts are touched and stirred and they give to God...this church is so generous and such a blessing, I just want to let you know that God has blessed us. Some of you say, "Oh good! I don't have to give anymore." That's between you and God, but it's such a blessing to pastor a church where there's such a heart of generosity and heart of giving and we can do ministry.

When people would come to the temple, they were getting ripped off. They had to change their money, so they went to the money changers and they were changing it at an exorbitant rate of interest—a high interest rate. The exchange rate was very high. Again, they were profiting off the people and ripping them off. It's totally tragic and sad what was happening.

Jesus comes on the scene, and He is angry. There's a lot that can be said, but write this down: righteous indignation. Do you know that Jesus got angry? He got real angry. He got so angry He made a whip. I don't know where He got the whip. The theory might be that some of the animals in that area that were tied up had been sold and the ropes were still lying around. He got a rope and drove them out. Jesus was a real man. I don't think it was His physical stature that drove them out. I think it was His moral purity and His conviction for the glory of God. I don't think He was a Charles Atlas, obviously He was the Son of God and could do anything with His power, but I think it was just His divine nature and holiness and zeal for God and the glory of God. They were convicted by it, and they just recoiled. It's interesting that He chases them out.

The area where they were at, by the way, when you read in your Bible the temple (and we talked about that on Sunday morning, Herod's temple, Zerubbabel's temple embellished by Herod) had an outer courtyard known as the court of the Gentiles. It started with this big outer courtyard, the court of the Gentiles. Inside of that was the court of the women, and in that courtroom, on the walls, there were the trumpet-shaped coffer where Jesus commended the widow that put in her two mites and so forth. Inside that were the male Jews, and inside that was the inner sanctuary where there was the Holy of Holies and the presence of God. There was a group of courtyards that led into the temple. It wasn't just one single building. It was in this outer area known as the court of the Gentiles where they were selling animals—doves, pigeons, lambs, and things like that—and had their money-changer's table.

In verse 15, "And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the

temple,” this is one of those scenes in the Bible that I would’ve loved to have been a fly on the wall. I would’ve loved to have actually seen the Lord’s face and the disciples thinking, He’s freaking out! What is He doing? This is no way to start your public ministry. He just got a whip and started chasing people out of church, and they were probably wondering, “What is going on?” We’re going to see in verse 17 that the disciples saw that it was a fulfillment of prophetic Scripture. He drives them out of the temple—the moneychangers—and overthrew their tables. This was righteous indignation, and He’s doing it with divine authority.

I would like to ask you a question. What makes you angry? Do you get angry when people are mean to you or people don’t like you or you don’t get your way or things don’t go according to your plans? Or, do you have a righteous indignation? The Bible says, “Be ye angry, and sin not.” It’s okay to be angry as long as it’s not a sinful anger. What is a sinful anger? It’s a self-centered, selfish anger. It’s an anger that isn’t concerned about the glory of God, the Word of God, or the things of God. It just takes things personally. You can get angry if you’re angry at the right time, the right way, for the right things. You get angry at sin. You get angry at satan. You get angry at what sin is doing in the lives of other people, and it forces you to pray and take action.

Jesus demonstrated anger toward this hypocrisy and this materialism that was going on in the temple. “And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my,” circle the word “my,” “Father’s house,” He didn’t say, “Our Father’s house.” They were not the children of God. Jesus was the Son of God, so He calls it, “my Father’s house,” because He was the Son of God. “...an house of merchandise,” you have made it a house of merchandise. Another gospel records it as, “...ye have made it a den of thieves.” I think if Jesus showed up at some churches today, He’d probably make a whip and drive out a lot of the leadership because they’ve turned a house that is to be a house of prayer for the glory of God into a house of merchandise and made it a den of thieves.

It’s important to note that Jesus cleansed the temple twice. He did it in the beginning of His ministry, and He did it at the end of His ministry. Don’t get confused. At the end of His ministry He does it a second time, which indicates that those guys that He drove off came back, right? He drove them off, and they couldn’t have been very upset or too convicted because they come back and start doing their thing again.

An interesting thought is that our hearts need Him to come in and cleanse us from sin. When Jesus comes into the temple, what does He do? He cleanses it. When Jesus comes into our lives, what does He do? He cleanses our hearts. He cleanses us from the inside out and makes us brand new.

I love the closing in verse 17, “And his disciples remembered that it was written,” and I told you that’s from Psalm 69:4. Actually, if you back up in Psalm 69 to verses 2-6, when you get a chance, check it out. It’s a marvelous Messianic Psalm that describes Jesus so perfectly. Many times the psalmist spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit describing the Messiah as He would come. Write down as well, Malachi 3:1, 3 where it actually predicted that the Messiah

would come to the temple suddenly and would cleanse the temple. There's a fulfillment there from at least two clear passages in the Old Testament just in Jesus coming to the temple and His zeal for the glory of God. As I read that story, I just pray that God would give all of us a zeal for God's glory and a commitment to the sanctity of God's people and God's Word.

The house of the Lord is not a physical building. This building is not God's house. You are God's house. You are God's temple. God doesn't dwell in temples made with hands, He dwells in hearts and lives. Amen? When we come together, we corporately form the church, and God is here with us. I think one of the problems in the contemporary church today is that we have a low view of the church. We have a low view of Scripture, of God, of sin, and of the church. I have felt for years the need for Christians to learn what the church is and the importance of the church, that you are part of the body of Christ, and the church is important. You can't have a take it or leave it cavalier attitude. Your average Christian today attends church like once a month. They're not committed to coming on a weekly basis. They're not committed to giving, serving, participating, praying, and doing all they can to make the church healthy and strong. Church isn't just about the pastor; it's not about the staff. It's about the people—praying for, committed to, serving, seeking to walk in unity, caring and valuing.

You know, I said we are blessed in America. We've got churches on every corner, but that might not always be the case. Do not take it for granted. You never know what can happen in our nation. Don't take it for granted that we have Wednesday night Bible studies, life groups, dinner fellowships, men's and women's studies, and other groups that meet during the week. Be committed to a local fellowship, not only receiving but giving and being a participant. Jesus had a zeal for God's house, and He had a zeal for the glory of God. We should have a same zeal that in our church God gets all the glory, honor, and praise.

We see His passion, now we move to His power in verses 18-22. "Then answered the Jews," this is a response to Jesus' cleansing the temple. When it says "the Jews" in verse 18, it's referring to the spiritual leaders, in this case primarily the Sadducees, who were the spiritual leaders in the temple. "...said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?" The things they're talking about are, "Who do You think You are chasing us out of the temple? You're a carpenter from Galilee, and you come in and chase us out of the temple, 'What sign shewest thou unto us,' that You have the authority to do these things?" Notice the Lord's response in verse 19. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. 20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building," that is, to date. It wasn't finished yet and wouldn't be for several years, but they had been building for 46 years, "And You're going to raise it up in three days?" "But he spake of the temple of his body."

Verse 21 is the apostle John's commentary, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He understood that Jesus was not talking about Herod's temple, He was talking about His body, "You kill Me and three days later I will raise it up." "But he spake of the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said." It's interesting,

in verse 17 it says, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," quoting the Old Testament Scriptures, and now they believe the Scriptures (verse 22), "...and the word which Jesus had said."

This is the response. They come to Jesus and say, "What sign do You show us?" He had just turned water into wine, and in holy righteous indignation and zeal for the glory of God, He just chased out these crooks from the temple. Now they come and say, "Well, show us a sign? What right do you have? What authority do you have," and here's the sign. In the New Testament, this is clearly laid out as one of the greatest, if not the greatest, sign of Jesus being the Son of God, the Savior of the world is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. In verse 19, we have His crucifixion, "Destroy this temple," and we have His resurrection, "and in three days I will raise it up." You know that one of the greatest signs or proofs that Jesus Christ is who He said He is is His resurrection from the dead—not that He was crucified but that He was buried and rose again from the dead. In Romans 1:4, it says that Christ has, "declared," and that word means to horizon or sanction off, "to be the Son of God...by the resurrection from the dead."

Every Christian ought to do their best to understand the historical narrative of the resurrection and be able to defend its historicity and its theological implications that Jesus rose from the dead. You ought to study and master that because it's something that's never been able to be disproved. If you can disprove the resurrection, you could kill Christianity; and people have tried for centuries and failed—Jesus died, Jesus was buried, and Jesus rose. He says, "Okay, here's a sign. Destroy this temple."

This is what we would call a veiled prophecy. It was a prophecy, but we would call it a veiled prophecy. Those who were unbelieving and hard of heart didn't see it, didn't know, couldn't comprehend. They said, "Forty-six years this temple has been being built, and You're going to build it in three days? No way!" They didn't realize that He was talking about His death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus was speaking to them of the temple of His body. Forty-six years this temple at this time was being built. About 27 A.D. is the time when Jesus is there in the temple, then it would be 40 A.D. before it would be finally finished, and later on it would be destroyed.

I want to give you a little...I promised this to somebody Sunday here in church who came to me and talked to me about a Jehovah's Witness knocking on his door. I said, "Well, don't miss Wednesday night." Have you ever had a Jehovah's Witness knock on your door? Yes, you have, right? We all have. I don't recommend if you don't really know what you're doing to try to debate or discuss things with them. Share your testimony, be nice to them, and if you get harsh with them, they believe, "We're of God, we're being persecuted," so be nice to them. It's hard to do. It's very hard to do. It's one of the hardest things I do, but I try my best.

Let me give you a little thing you can do. This is just...yeah, we're going to trick 'em, okay? But I'm going to give you something. When a Jehovah's Witness knocks on your door, if you want to ask a question, ask them this question: Who raised Jesus from the dead? I'll tell you what their answer's going to be. Their answer is going to be that Jehovah God raised Him from the

dead. That's their answer, every time, "Jehovah God raised Him from the dead." Then you turn in your Bible to John 2:19, "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days," and I want you to point out to that Jehovah's Witness on your doorstep, Jesus said, "I will raise it up." Jesus raised Himself from the dead. That will blow their socks off. If they don't believe what you're saying, read verse 21, "But he spake of the temple of his body," b-o-d-y, you can spell it for them, and it's the same in their Bible. They'll be reading from the New World Translation. It's the same in their Bible.

In all the years that I've used this to share with a Jehovah's Witness so that they'll go on their way and I can go back and eat my cereal, they'll say, "Well, we'll come back with an answer," or "We'll get back to you." They've never come back with an answer. They say Jehovah rose Him from the dead. They don't believe Jesus would rise Himself from the dead. If Jesus raised Himself from the dead, then Jesus Christ is God. The Bible teaches that God the Father raised Him up, God the Holy Spirit raised Him up, and that God the Son, Jesus, raised Himself up from the dead. I recommend you just keep it simple, ask them the question, show them that Jesus promised He would raise Himself from the dead, and the disciples knew, after He rose, that indeed He was the Son of God.

Notice in verse 22, "When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said." Here's a case where the disciples didn't get it. They're kind of like scratching their heads, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Huh, what's this all about?" That's why I said it's a veiled prophecy, but when the Lord rose from the dead...remember right up to the time Jesus was crucified and buried, until they saw Him alive, their hopes were dashed. They didn't believe He was going to rise, even though He told them over and over and over again. Here in hindsight, John says, "After He rose from the dead, then we believed and understood." Make no question about it, Jesus keeps His promises, does He not? Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," from the dead.

Some like to get into a little typology here and point out that when Jesus was crucified that the veil of the temple was ripped from top to bottom and that the Jewish temple was no longer needed because the sacrifice for sin had been given and that He actually was destroying that temple by His crucifixion. I think that's reading into the text. It's interesting, but it's not really the message of the story that we have before us other than that Jesus gave them the sign that they were asking for which would be His death, burial, and resurrection.

Another time they came wanting a sign, do you remember what Jesus said? He said, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas," which, by the way, Jesus believed in Jonah and that he was swallowed by a whale. If you believe there was a man named Jonah that got swallowed by the whale, you're in good company—Jesus believed it, too. He says, "...and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Jesus predicted again that He would be crucified, buried, and then eventually

resurrected. As Jonah was spit out of that whale, it was a picture of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In closing, we move from His power (verses 18-22) to His perception as John wraps up this episode here in the city of Jerusalem. By the way, in the synoptics—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—the focus is Capernaum in Galilee. In John's gospel, the focus is Jerusalem. It's an interesting distinction. In verses 23-25 is His perception. We see His glory in His power but also now in His perception. "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover," the Passover would last for a week. It was seven days. "...in the feast day, many believed in his name," notice that, "when they saw the miracles which he did." You read that and go, "Wow, that's awesome! Praise God!" Everyone believed in His name because they saw His miracles (verse 24), "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men," that's His perception or His knowledge, "And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man."

There's an interesting play on words here. They saw the miracles which Jesus did and (verse 23), "believed in his name...But Jesus did not commit," the word "commit" is the same Greek word translated in verse 23 "believed," so "many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles...But Jesus did not," believe in them. It's an intended play on words. They believed on Him, but He didn't believe on them. You say, "What's the deal? What's going on here?" Their belief—this is so important to understand—was superficial. It wasn't genuine. It wasn't authentic. You can't get to heaven or be saved because you believe in miracles, you get to heaven and are saved because you believe in a Person—you believe in Jesus Christ. It's not believing in the miracles that He does, it's not believing in the Words that He speaks, it's believing in who He is. You must understand, salvation has to be accompanied with some information. You have to know that there's a God and that God sent His Son and that Jesus died on the cross and bore your sins and rose from the dead; that, "I am a sinner. I'm separated from God, and if I don't trust Christ, I will be lost." You have to have this knowledge to believe in Jesus to be saved. You can't just whimsically, emotionally say, "Oh, I believe in God," or "I see a miracle."

If you come to faith in Christ because of a miracle, what happens when you don't see a miracle? If you come to Jesus because someone was healed, what happens when they're not healed. If you come to faith in Jesus Christ because He gives you some sign, what happens when He doesn't give you a sign? "Well, God gave me a job," or "God healed my marriage," or "God healed my cancer, so I believe in Him," and then the cancer comes back. What are you going to do? Not a Sunday goes by but what I pray with more than one person in front of this platform who has cancer. Many times, "Pastor John, my cancer has come back. I was cancer-free for ten years. My cancer has come back, and it's stage IV." God got you through it before, but you're trusting God to have His way in your life again.

Their faith was superficial—it wasn't genuine. I'm quite often asked about, "What about people that just say they're Christian but they're really not born again or they don't really live for the Lord or they're really not following Christ." Only God knows the heart, and that's what this story is telling us. Jesus knew their hearts. He knew what was in them. He knew all. The reason

Jesus didn't believe or commit to them is because He knew their hearts were not right. It was superficial, so they were professors but not possessors. These are the people that will say, "Lord, Lord, didn't we do these wonderful things in Your name?" And Jesus said, "Depart from Me. I never knew you." They didn't have a real relationship with Christ, but Jesus doesn't commit Himself to them. It's interesting that Jesus didn't believe on them. Why? Verse 24, "... because he knew all men." Jesus sees and knows our hearts. You can maybe fool people, but you can't fool God. God sees and knows your heart, so if you're not truly born again, He sees and knows, and you're not fooling Him.

Verse 25, "And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man." Let me give you a little teaser here, John 3:1, "There was a man," there's no break between chapters 2 and 3. What you have is an intended contrast. We go from those who Jesus didn't believe in—their belief was shallow and superficial—to a very religious Jew named Nicodemus. There was a man who was a Pharisee, but he came sincerely, humbly, earnestly, genuinely wanting to know the truth; and I believe that Nicodemus became a true follower of Christ, that he was born again. You might even add John 4 (the next couple of chapters are so marvelous), where there was a woman at a well. She's the person we call the "bad" Samaritan. We have the good Samaritan, she's the bad Samaritan. Jesus had an appointment with her and He knew what was in her heart. He knew her sin but stops and dialogues with her. She opens her heart, believes on Jesus, and comes to faith in Jesus Christ.

These, in this text, are not real believers. Just because someone says, "Oh, I prayed a prayer," or "I walked the aisle," or "I raised my hand," or "I go to church," or "I've been baptized," doesn't mean that you're a real, genuine believer. You must be born again as Nicodemus was. We need to be careful and slow to judge, by the way, too. Yes, Jesus said, "You'll know them by their fruit," but only God knows a person's heart. Jesus knows and sees our hearts. Amen?