

The Gospel of John Series

**The Truth Is Right In
Front of You
– Part 1 –
John 3:11-15**



5-Day Devotional Companion

Day 1: "When Truth Confronts Us"

Scripture Reading: John 3:11

"Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony."

Daily Devotional

Have you ever had that moment when truth confronts you and something within you immediately resists it? Perhaps it was a friend gently pointing out a blind spot in your character. Maybe it was a sermon that seemed to speak directly to your hidden struggles. Or possibly it was a Bible passage that challenged your comfortable assumptions about how you've been living.

In John 3:11, Jesus expresses a profound frustration to Nicodemus. Here stands the Son of God—Truth incarnate—speaking with divine authority about eternal matters, yet facing rejection. Not because His words lacked clarity or power, but because human hearts resist uncomfortable truths.

Jesus doesn't say, "You don't understand my testimony." He says, "You do not accept our testimony." The issue wasn't intellectual confusion but spiritual resistance.

We often do the same thing. We don't typically reject truth because we can't comprehend it—we reject it because accepting it would demand change. It's far easier to dismiss, deflect, or debate than to allow truth to transform us.

Think about the areas in your life where you feel that inner resistance when God's Word speaks. Perhaps it's about forgiveness, or stewardship, or priorities, or relationships. That resistance isn't a sign to back away—it's often a signpost pointing to exactly where God wants to work in your life.

Nicodemus came to Jesus at night, partially hidden, keeping one foot in the shadows. But Jesus was inviting him—and us—into full daylight,

where truth isn't just acknowledged intellectually but embraced wholeheartedly.

The beautiful promise embedded here is that Jesus doesn't stop speaking truth just because we initially resist it. He continues testifying, continues revealing, continues inviting us to step out of darkness and into light. The question is: will we finally listen?

Reflection Questions

1. What truth from God's Word have you been resistant to lately? Why does this particular truth make you uncomfortable?
2. How can you tell the difference between healthy questioning and unhealthy resistance to God's truth?
3. Where in your life might God be calling you to move from just hearing to truly receiving His Word?

Prayer

Father, I confess that sometimes I resist Your truth not because I don't understand it, but because I don't want to change. Forgive me for the times I've heard Your Word but haven't truly received it. Open my heart to the uncomfortable truths You want to speak into my life. Give me the courage to step fully into the light, even when it exposes areas that need transformation. Help me not just to hear, but to receive. Not just to know, but to believe. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Today's Action Step

Write down one truth from Scripture that you've been avoiding or resisting. Be honest about why this truth makes you uncomfortable. Then, pray specifically for the courage to embrace this truth and ask God to show you one practical step you can take to move from resistance to acceptance.

Day 2: "Faith Before Understanding"

Scripture Reading: John 3:12

"I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?"

Daily Devotional

Most of us approach life with a simple formula: understand first, then trust. We want explanations before commitment, clarity before faith. We say, "God, if You'll just help me understand why this is happening, then I'll trust You." It's our natural human tendency—to demand understanding before faith.

But in John 3:12, Jesus flips this formula completely. Speaking to Nicodemus, He points out a profound spiritual principle: faith comes before full understanding, not after it.

Jesus had just used earthly analogies—wind, water, and birth—to explain spiritual rebirth. Yet Nicodemus still struggled to grasp the concept. So Jesus essentially says, "If you can't believe when I use simple earthly metaphors, how will you ever believe when I reveal deeper heavenly realities?"

This mirrors our own spiritual journey. We often want God to explain everything—the why behind our suffering, the purpose in our waiting, the master plan for our lives. But spiritual growth doesn't work that way. God doesn't give us a blueprint; He gives us daily bread.

Think of Abraham, called to leave his homeland for an unknown destination. He didn't receive a detailed itinerary—just a promise and an invitation to walk by faith. Or consider Mary, who couldn't possibly comprehend how she would bear the Son of God, yet responded, "Let it be to me according to your word."

God doesn't withhold understanding to frustrate us. Rather, He invites us into a relationship where faith becomes the pathway to deeper revelation. When we take steps of obedience with the light we have, God faithfully provides more light for the journey ahead.

Perhaps you're facing a situation right now where God seems to be saying, "Trust Me first, and understanding will follow." It might be a relationship difficulty, a career decision, or a persistent doubt. Whatever it is, remember that spiritual maturity isn't measured by how much we understand, but by how much we're willing to trust when we don't understand.

As Jesus told His disciples in John 13:7, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Sometimes the "later" comes in this life; sometimes it awaits us in eternity. But faith always precedes full understanding.

Reflection Questions

1. In what areas of your life are you demanding understanding before obedience?
2. How might your spiritual growth be hindered by this approach?
3. Can you recall a time when you stepped out in faith without fully understanding, and God provided clarity along the way?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, forgive me for the times I've demanded understanding before trust. I confess my tendency to want all the answers before I'm willing to follow You. Thank You for Your patience with my questions and doubts. Help me to walk by faith, not by sight, trusting that Your ways are higher than my ways and Your thoughts higher than my thoughts. Give me courage to take the next step with the light You've already given me, believing that You will provide more light as I need it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Today's Action Step

Identify one area in your life where you've been saying to God, "I'll trust You when I understand," and intentionally flip that statement to "I'll trust You in order to understand." Write down one specific step of faith you can take today—without having all the answers—and commit to taking that step within the next 24 hours.

Day 3: "The One From Heaven"

Scripture Reading: John 3:13

"No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man."

Daily Devotional

In our information-saturated world, everyone has an opinion. Social media platforms amplify countless voices. News outlets compete for our attention. Self-proclaimed experts offer advice on everything from relationships to finances to spirituality. With so many competing voices, how do we discern which ones deserve our trust?

This is what makes John 3:13 so powerful. In this verse, Jesus makes an astonishing claim that sets Him apart from every other voice: "No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man."

Think about what Jesus is declaring here. He isn't merely claiming to have special insight or extraordinary wisdom. He's stating that He alone has firsthand knowledge of heavenly realities because He originated there. No philosopher, no religious teacher, no spiritual guru can make this claim. Only Jesus speaks with the authority of one who has seen the Father face to face.

This statement wasn't just bold—it was revolutionary. In a single sentence, Jesus establishes His unique credentials. While others speculate about divine matters, Jesus testifies as an eyewitness. While others climb upward seeking enlightenment, Jesus descended from glory to bring light to our darkness.

The implications are profound. If Jesus truly came from heaven, then His words aren't just good advice—they're divine revelation. His teachings aren't just helpful suggestions—they're authoritative truth. His promises aren't just comforting thoughts—they're absolute certainties.

This leaves us with a crucial question: If Jesus is indeed the only one who has come from heaven, how seriously should we take His words? How differently should we respond to His teachings compared to all other voices?

Nicodemus came to Jesus as a respected religious authority, yet he stood before One whose authority infinitely surpassed his own. The same is true for us. No matter our credentials or accomplishments, we stand before the One who came from heaven with heavenly wisdom.

The beauty of this truth is that we don't have to wonder what God is like or what He expects from us. Jesus—the One from heaven—has made Him known. As John writes elsewhere, "No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is Himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made Him known" (John 1:18).

Today, as countless voices clamor for your attention, remember that only One speaks with the authority of heaven itself.

Reflection Questions

1. How does Jesus' heavenly origin impact how you receive His teachings?
2. What other "voices" have you allowed to have authority in your life? How do they compare to Jesus' authority?
3. In what area of your life do you need to realign yourself with Jesus' heavenly perspective rather than earthly wisdom?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, I stand in awe of who You are—the One who came from heaven, full of glory and truth. Forgive me for the times I've treated Your words casually or elevated other voices above Yours. Thank You for leaving heaven's glory to reveal the Father to us. Help me to recognize and submit to Your unique authority in every area of my life. Tune my ears to Your voice above all others. May Your heavenly perspective transform my earthly thinking. In Your name I pray, Amen.

Today's Action Step

Take inventory of the voices that influence your daily decisions and worldview. List the top five sources you regularly consult for guidance (people, media outlets, books, etc.). Next to each, write how their message aligns with or differs from Jesus' teachings. Choose one area where you need to elevate Christ's authority above competing voices, and commit to specific steps to make that change.

Day 4: "The Bronze Serpent"

Scripture Reading: John 3:14

"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up..."

Daily Devotional

Sometimes the most profound truths come wrapped in surprising imagery. In John 3:14, Jesus reaches back nearly 1,500 years into Israel's history to illuminate His coming sacrifice with a powerful visual from their wilderness wanderings.

The story Jesus references comes from Numbers 21:4-9. The Israelites, impatient and discouraged on their journey, spoke against God and Moses. In response, God sent venomous snakes that bit the people, and many died. When the people confessed their sin, God instructed Moses to make a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. Anyone who had been bitten could look at the bronze serpent and live.

It's a strange image at first glance—healing coming through gazing at the very thing that caused harm. Yet Jesus declares that this ancient event foreshadowed something far greater: His own crucifixion.

Consider the parallels: Just as the Israelites were dying from snake venom, humanity is dying from the poison of sin. Just as the bronze serpent was lifted up on a pole, Jesus would be lifted up on a cross. Just as those who looked to the serpent were physically healed, those who look to Christ in faith receive spiritual healing and eternal life.

The brilliance of this comparison reveals several profound truths:

First, it shows that the cross was no afterthought or emergency plan. Centuries before Calvary, God was already painting pictures of redemption throughout Israel's history.

Second, it highlights the simplicity of salvation. The Israelites didn't need to perform elaborate rituals or meet stringent requirements. They

simply needed to look and believe. Similarly, salvation through Christ isn't achieved through our own efforts—it comes through turning our gaze toward Him in faith.

Third, it demonstrates that healing comes when we face our deadly condition honestly. The Israelites had to acknowledge they were snake-bitten and dying before they would look to God's remedy. Likewise, we must recognize our sin-sick condition before we'll turn to the cross.

Perhaps most remarkable is how Jesus transforms a symbol of judgment into a symbol of mercy. The bronze serpent represented God's judgment on Israel's sin, yet it became the means of their healing. On the cross, Jesus bore the judgment for our sin, transforming an instrument of execution into the source of eternal life.

Today, where are you fixing your gaze? Are you looking to your own resources, other people, or worldly solutions to address your deepest needs? Or are you looking to the One lifted up for your salvation?

Reflection Questions

1. How does understanding the bronze serpent story deepen your appreciation for Christ's sacrifice?
2. Where in your life are you trying to "heal yourself" instead of looking to Jesus?
3. What makes it difficult sometimes to maintain a consistent focus on Christ rather than on your problems?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for the beautiful foreshadowing of Christ's sacrifice in the story of the bronze serpent. I'm amazed at how You've woven the thread of redemption throughout all of history. Thank You that salvation isn't complicated—that I don't have to earn it or work for it, but simply look to Jesus in faith. Forgive me for the times I've tried to find healing and wholeness apart from the cross. Help me to keep my eyes fixed on Jesus, especially when life's trials and temptations try to divert my gaze. Thank You that in looking to Him, I find not just temporary relief but eternal life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Today's Action Step

Find or create a small visual reminder of "looking to Jesus" (perhaps a small cross, a bookmark with John 3:14-15, or even a simple drawing of your own). Place this reminder somewhere you'll see it regularly throughout your day—your desk, bathroom mirror, car dashboard, or phone lockscreen. Each time you see it, practice a moment of "looking to Jesus" by offering a short prayer of surrender and thanksgiving.

Day 5: "Look and Live"

Scripture Reading: John 3:15

"...that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him."

Daily Devotional

After four days of journey, we arrive at the destination—the purpose behind it all. Why did Jesus come from heaven? Why must the Son of Man be lifted up like the bronze serpent? John 3:15 gives us the beautiful answer: "That everyone who believes may have eternal life in him."

This simple verse contains a universe of hope in just a few words. Let's unpack this treasure:

"Everyone who believes" - Notice the breathtaking inclusivity of this invitation. Not "everyone who achieves" or "everyone who deserves" or "everyone who performs," but simply "everyone who believes." This door stands open to all people regardless of background, past failures, or present struggles. The only qualification is faith.

"May have" - This isn't a distant possibility or a mere hope. It's a divine guarantee. When we place our faith in Christ, eternal life isn't something we might eventually receive; it becomes our present possession. As Jesus declares later in John 5:24, "Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life." Present tense, not future.

"Eternal life" - While we often think of eternal life as simply living forever, Jesus defines it differently in John 17:3: "Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." Eternal life is about quality more than quantity—it's intimate relationship with God beginning now and extending forever.

"In him" - These two small words might be the most important. Eternal life isn't found in a philosophy, a religion, or a set of practices—it's

found in a Person. We don't merely believe facts about Jesus; we place our trust in Jesus Himself. Eternal life is not just something Jesus gives; it's something Jesus is.

The parallels to the bronze serpent story complete the picture. Just as the dying Israelites needed only to look at the lifted serpent to receive physical healing, we need only to look to the crucified and risen Christ to receive spiritual life. The simplicity is both stunning and scandalous.

Think about it—no complex rituals, no heroic moral achievements, no spiritual ladder to climb. Just look and live. Believe and receive.

This simplicity often becomes a stumbling block. Like Naaman who initially rejected Elisha's simple instruction to wash in the Jordan River, we sometimes resist the straightforward nature of salvation. Surely it must be more complicated! Surely we must contribute something!

But faith is not a work we perform; it's a gift we receive. It's not earning; it's accepting. It's not trying; it's trusting.

Today, whether you've walked with Christ for decades or are just beginning to explore faith, hear the invitation afresh: Look to Jesus. Believe in Him. And live—truly, abundantly, eternally—in Him.

Reflection Questions

1. What makes simple faith so difficult sometimes? Why do we tend to complicate what God has made simple?
2. How is eternal life (as relationship with God) changing your daily experience right now?
3. In what areas of your spiritual journey might you be trying to add requirements beyond “believe”?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the precious gift of eternal life. I'm amazed by the simplicity of Your invitation—not to work harder or do more, but simply to look to You and believe. Forgive me for the times I've complicated Your gospel with my own additions and requirements. Thank You that salvation depends not on my performance but on Your

perfect sacrifice. Help me to experience eternal life not just as a future hope but as a present reality—knowing You more deeply each day. And give me courage to share this simple yet profound message with others who are still looking for life in all the wrong places. In Your name I pray, Amen.

Today's Action Step

Share what you've learned this week with someone else. This could be a text to a friend, a conversation with a family member, or a social media post summarizing your biggest takeaway from this devotional journey. Focus especially on the beautiful simplicity of "look and live" and how this truth is impacting your life. Then, set aside some time for extended prayer, thanking God for each specific truth you've discovered in John 3:11-15.

The Journey Continues

Thank You

Dear Friend,

Thank you for completing this 5-day journey through John 3:11-15. We hope that spending focused time exploring Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus has deepened your understanding of God's Word and drawn you closer to Christ. Just as Jesus invited Nicodemus to step from darkness into light, our prayer is that you've experienced similar moments of illumination and transformation during this devotional experience.

The Next Step

The truth is, spiritual growth doesn't happen in a single moment or through a single devotional guide. It's a lifelong journey of looking to Jesus day by day, moment by moment. The verses you've studied this week contain truths so profound that you could spend a lifetime exploring their depths.

As you continue your walk with Christ, we encourage you to:

- Return to these passages regularly, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal new insights
- Put into practice the action steps you've committed to during this study
- Share what you've learned with others in your community
- Remain open to how God continues to speak through His Word

Stay Connected

We're committed to providing resources that help you grow in your relationship with Christ. To continue your spiritual journey with us:

- Join us for Sunday Morning Bible Study at 9:30am
- And join us for worship each Sunday at 10:30am
- Subscribe to our YouTube channel for sermon videos and additional content
- Follow us on social media @cbcmorrilton
- Visit our website [CBCMorrilton.com] for upcoming events and resources
- Join a small group where you can discuss and apply these truths together

If you have questions, prayer requests, or feedback about this devotional guide, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at **CBCMorrilton@gmail.com** or **501-354-2117**. We'd love to hear how God has used this resource in your life.

Remember, Jesus didn't just come to give information—He came to offer transformation. Keep looking to Him, and keep living in the light of His truth.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Scott McDonald

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