



Walking With the Savior

Through An Eyewitness Account of John

John, one of the sons of Zebedee, stood as an eyewitness to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. He began his journey as a fisherman, leaving behind his nets and the future he had planned for himself to follow a teacher, a prophet, and a miracle worker. At the outset, John did not fully understand who Jesus was or what lay ahead. In faith, he aligned himself with Jesus, drawn by His words and deeds. As John walked alongside Jesus, witnessing His teachings and miracles, he gradually realized that Jesus was far more than a prophet or a remarkable teacher. John came to understand that Jesus was God in the flesh. This revelation was not just a turning point for John personally, but a moment of eternal significance. By choosing to follow Jesus, John's future was forever changed, and his decision would go on to impact the world—not only in his own time but throughout every generation to come. ***Let's embark on an inspiring journey with John as we walk alongside Jesus.***

Background Matters

JOHN'S EXPLANATION (12:37–43).

12:37. John from the beginning of his Gospel (1:11) had sounded the theme of national unbelief. John now explained that in spite of **all** Jesus' **miraculous signs** (*sēmeia*), **they still would not believe in Him**. Their unbelief was irrational, as sin always is.

12:38. The Jews' national, irrational unbelief had been predicted by **Isaiah the prophet**. The clearest Old Testament passage concerning the suffering Servant (Isa. 53:1–12) began by stating that Israel would not perceive God's revelation in and through the Servant. **Who has believed our message and seen His arm ... revealed?** implies that only a few have believed (quoting Isa. 53:1).



12:39–40. Then John again quoted from **Isaiah** (6:10) to explain that the nation as a whole was *unable* to believe. Because they constantly rejected God’s revelation, He had punished them with judicial blindness **and deadened ... hearts**. People in Jesus’ day, like those in Isaiah’s day, refused to believe. They “would not believe” (John 12:37); therefore **they could not believe** (v. 39). Similar illustrations of God’s punishing of persistent sin by hardening are common (Ex. 9:12; Rom. 1:24, 26, 28; 2 Thes. 2:8–12).

12:41. In a vision **Isaiah ... saw** “the Lord Almighty” (lit., “Yahweh of hosts,” or “Yahweh of armies”; Isa. 6:3). John wrote that this glory Isaiah saw was **Jesus’ glory**. The implication is startling: Jesus is Yahweh! (Cf. John 1:18; 10:30; 20:28; Col. 2:9.) Jesus in His nature is God (but God the Son is distinct in person from God the Father and God the Spirit). Isaiah **spoke about Him**, for many of Isaiah’s prophecies predicted the coming Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth (e.g., Isa. 4:2; 7:14; 9:6–7; 11:1–5, 10; 32:1; 42:1–4; 49:1–7; 52:13–53:12; 61:1–3). Earlier Jesus had said that Moses wrote about Him (John 5:46).

12:42–43. In spite of massive national unbelief, the situation was not hopeless. God always has a remnant. **Many** individuals in high places did believe **in** Jesus, but **for fear** of being **put out of the synagogue** they did **not** openly **confess** Him. They feared men’s opinions and **loved** men’s **praise ... more than** God’s **praise**.

2. JESUS’ EXHORTATION (12:44–50)

When and where Jesus spoke these words is not indicated. This seems to be a general summary of Jesus’ manifestation of Himself to the nation.

12:44–46. **Cried out** (*ekraxen*, “called out,” *not* wept; cf. 1:15; 7:28, 37) indicates the importance of the issues before the nation. **Jesus** is the perfect manifestation of God, **the One who sent** Him (1:18; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3), so that to **believe in** Jesus is to believe in God. People do not have two objects of faith: God and/or Jesus. When one sees Jesus, he **sees the Father who sent** Him (cf. John 12:41; 14:9). Jesus came to lead people out of Satan’s kingdom of **darkness** into God’s kingdom of love and **light** (cf. 1:4, 9; 8:12; 12:35; Col. 1:13–14).

12:47–50. Since Jesus is God’s Word (*Logos*) to people, God **spoke** decisively and finally in Him (Heb. 1:1–3). The issue is the command of **the Father**. To obey **the Father** is to come **to eternal life** (John 12:50). To reject the Father’s word—which is Jesus’ **very word** (v. 48; cf. v. 50b; 7:16; 14:10, 24)—is to abide in death. Moses predicted the coming of the great Prophet (One who would speak for God). Moses said, “You must



listen to Him” (Deut. 18:15). Condemnation **at the last day** is the penalty for rejecting the One whom the Father sent (Deut. 18:18–19; John 3:18, 36; 5:24).

The purpose of God’s revelation in Jesus is positive: He came **to save**, not **to judge** (12:47; cf. 3:17 and comments on 9:39). But rejection of God’s Revelation inevitably brings a hardening in sin and ultimately God’s judgment.

In speaking of Jewish national unbelief John balanced his theological explanation with Jesus’ serious exhortation to the nation to repent. In the words of Moses, these “are not just idle words for you—they are your life” (Deut. 32:47).¹

This Week in "Walking With the Savior,"

We encounter a puzzling scene: many people appear to believe in Jesus.

They cheer for Him and welcome Him with palm branches. Yet John tells us that the Jewish people were deeply infected by the sin of unbelief. Belief—or a Jesus of Our Own Making?

How could they believe and yet not truly believe? Perhaps they envisioned a Jesus who fit their own worldview rather than embracing the vision of Jesus revealed by the Father.

This week, we will explore that tension and search for answers.

Study Guide 41

This study guide presents daily assignments that are specifically crafted to enhance your growth in the Word. Embrace each moment to meditate and reflect, and watch as your spiritual maturity flourishes through your dedicated efforts.

When Seeing Isn’t Believing!

John 12:37–50

Topics:

¹ Edwin A. Blum, “John,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 318–19.



Acceptance, Believe, Complacency, Darkness, Eternal Life, Faith, Fear, Follow, God, Hardheartedness, Jesus Christ, Judgment, Life, Light, Love, Miracles, Peer Pressure, Prophecy, Rejection, Salvation, Unbelievers, Words

Open It, Mondays. Open your heart and mind to the truth of the Word.

1. *Why do people seek fame and the acceptance of others?

Explore It, Tuesdays, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

2. What effect did Jesus' miracles have on the unbelieving Jews? (12:37)

3. What was significant about the response of the Jews to Jesus' ministry? (12:38)

4. *Why couldn't the Jews of Jesus' day believe in Him? (12:39–40)

5. What did Isaiah say about the Jews of Jesus' day? (12:41)

6. *Why didn't the leaders who did believe in Jesus admit their faith? (12:42–43)

7. What is true about any person who believes in Christ? (12:44–45)



8. Why did Jesus come into the world? (12:46)

Push on Wednesdays; keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

9. What did Jesus say about the person who hears His words, but does not keep them? (12:47)

10. *What did Jesus say would condemn the person who did not accept His words? (12:48)

11. What kind of teaching did Jesus give us? (12:49)

12. Why are Jesus' words important? (12:50)

13. How can people see the work of Jesus in others' lives and still not believe in Him?

14. *What blinds us to spiritual truth?

15. When and why have you been afraid to admit your faith in Jesus?

Get It Thursdays, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

16. *What consequences might a Christian face for publicly admitting faith in Jesus?



17. Why do we want to pursue the praise and acceptance of other people rather than the praise and acceptance of God?

18. Out of what kind of darkness has Jesus taken you?

19. How can we accept and keep the words of Jesus?

Drive it Home, Fridays, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

20. *To whom do you need to admit your faith in Jesus, regardless of the consequences?
When can you?

21. In what personal circumstance do you want to seek God's acceptance over the praise and acceptance of others?

A Journey Through The Gospel of John **2026**

Download your study guide at: Unlockingthetruth.us