

**THE SERMONS, LECTURES, AND SONGS OF
SIDNEY EDWARD COX**

CD 89
Gospel of John
Chapters 9-12
Pictures of Our Lord

Editorial Note: On many occasions, Sidney Cox delivered what were a series of either sermons or Bible lessons on the Gospel of John. In the case of this particular sermon, I do not know the date or place where it was delivered.

It was delivered to a live congregation and indeed seems to have been one of a series that he had delivered to this group. In particular, the previous night he had covered the first eight chapters of the Gospel of John with this group. However, I have been unable to locate the related sermons in this rendition of this series.

J. Douglas Cox, grandson of Sidney and Violet Cox. August 10, 2010

Turn with me once more to the Gospel of John. We will continue our studies where we left off last night. We have been just looking at the book, not attempting to preach sermons from it or anything of the kind. We've just been looking at the book to see what the book has to say. I'm one of those who are deeply convinced that the Bible is more important than anything that anybody says about it. So we've been trying to get out of the way and let the Bible do its own talking, say its own word, give its own message. And we haven't been attempting to interpret it or anything of the kind. We've been trying to find out what's in the Bible and what it has to say, and what it has to say to each one of us individually.

One of the remarkable things about the Word of God that makes it different to any other book is that it has a personal message for you. It will talk to you no matter where you turn to it. It will talk to you if we're just wise enough to listen. And so we've been looking at the Word of God in this particular section of the Gospel of John and letting the book talk to us.

We have been dealing with it as a different book to that which preceded it in the three previous gospels. And we're noting a number of differences, distinctions of the Gospel of John. And last night we began to talk about one of the most important distinctions of the Gospel of John and that is that in each chapter there is a separate picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we started right in at Chapter 1 and we went through to Chapter 8, noting what our Lord is; just pulling aside the veil a little bit so that we might see Him. Take a good look at Jesus.

Now tonight we are going to start in and do the remaining chapters, at least we'll go as far as we can, so that we may see exactly what our Lord is in every chapter of the Gospel of John.

In Chapter 1, of course, He is the Word of God. In Chapter 2, He is the Cleansing of God. In Chapter 3, He is the Salvation of God. In Chapter 4, the Satisfaction of God. In Chapter 5, He is the Judgment of God. In Chapter 6, the Bread of Life. In Chapter 7, the Living Water. In Chapter 8, the Light of the

World. And when we come to Chapter 9, we find again another lovely, beautiful picture of our Lord. Before we look at it, let's talk to Him a bit, shall we?

(Prayer)

Our Father, we pray that as we approach Thy throne of grace and meet together in the name of the Lord Jesus, that Thou will overshadow us with Thy blessing. May we be more conscious of Thy presence than we are of that of each other. May we hear Thy voice more distinctly and clearly than any other voice - the inward voice reminding us of what's been happening today; the inward voice that would intrude and remind us about tomorrow; the inward voice that would bring our problems before us when we fain would forget them. We pray, our Father, that we may hear Thy voice, use Thy word for our blessing, our strengthening. May it be to us the precious thing that Thou didst intend it to be. In Jesus name, Amen.

Now, the interesting character that we see at the beginning of the ninth chapter of the Gospel of John is the man born blind. And you will remember that there is a distinction between this man and the other blind men who came in touch with Jesus. He's not the only blind man that found himself in company with Christ. Some of them are named, some of them are not. But this man is quite distinct from all of them. And herein lies the key to the picture of our Lord. Here is the way in which we discover what Jesus Christ is in the ninth chapter of the Gospel of John. The man born blind is quite different to these other folks in the respect that he was born blind, and that makes him a distinct character.

You will remember that one of the things that was said by the company of folks who watched this miraculous thing when our Lord created sight. This was not a miracle of healing at all. It was a miracle of creation. There was nothing there to be healed to start with. Our Lord didn't heal blindness here at all. Our Lord created sight where sight had never been before. And those that observed that miraculous thing said, "Never since the world began has it been known that a man born blind ever received his sight."¹ It was a tremendous moment when our Lord, the creator, gave sight in eyes that had never seen before. We've got a distinct character before us tonight. This wonderful, wonderful picture of our Lord in the midst of this.

Now, to the people on the outside watching, what our Lord did was an impossibility. Let's note that if you please, because our Lord steps into the midst of a picture of need, and does the impossible. This man couldn't do anything for himself. The people around about couldn't do anything for himself. He had no merit that would warrant any such act on the part of our Lord. It was entirely an act of grace.

Now when God steps into the midst of the impossible and does that which only God can do, regardless of our deserts, regardless of our merit, ignoring all together everything else except His own grace, that is the grace of God in action. Grace is God doing the impossible for the undeserving. When God saved you, my dear, he did the impossible for the undeserving. You didn't deserve it at all.

I was reading a little note in one of Dr. Ironside's messages only a day or so ago, and it was a very interesting thing. We had no rights at all at the time of salvation. There are some Christians that think that they have rights. There were men in a meeting one time who were arguing about their rights, Christian men, in a church meeting. "I've got a right to this! I have a right to that! If you interfere with

1 John 9:32

my rights there's something going to happen!” And so on. “We've got a right to this,” and so on. And an old man in the meeting who was hard of hearing said, “What was that I heard you say, my brother? You talking about your rights. Did I hear you correctly?” He said, “Don't you forget that if you had your rights you would be in hell right now.” And if we had our rights, that's exactly where we would have been at the moment when our Lord put his hand upon us, and transformed us by his grace.

And you find our Lord in the midst of this situation and when you look at it, you watch him do the impossible. You watch a man utterly worthless, utterly undeserving, utterly helpless, and then you watch our Lord step into the middle and give something that had never been there before. Not just cure him, not make him a better man – make him a new man, so that he had eyes now that he could see. And our Lord in the ninth chapter of the Gospel of John is the grace and mercy of God.

Now let's look at Chapter 10 for a moment. We've got a great picture in Chapter 10 - it's the picture of the, “Good Shepherd who giveth his life for the sheep.”² That's the mark of the Good Shepherd – “He giveth his life for the sheep.” You will notice that this chapter starts with a very dark picture of a sheepfold, and an enemy, a robber seeking to get in and disturb and plunder the sheepfold. That's the way it starts. And then, in the midst of this darkness, as if the Good Shepherd had stepped through the dark curtain there, there he stands, the Good Shepherd who giveth his life for the sheep. And it's a very beautiful picture. You don't have to look in Chapter 10 to wonder what our Lord is, for He tells us what He is. “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” That's the mark of the Good Shepherd - he giveth his life for the sheep. Not merely his messages, not merely his service, not merely his encouragement, not merely his kindness, but his life. He giveth his life for the sheep.

You will find suggestions of the sheepfold elsewhere, other than in the Gospel of John. For instance, you will find the number of sheep that this Good Shepherd had. How many did he have? How many? One hundred, that's right. He had one hundred. How many did he lose? One, that's right. That's right. And he went after the one that was lost. Now, let me ask you this. How many of the ninety and nine did he lose while he was hunting for the one that was lost? None, not one, not one, not one. He wasn't so busy running a revival meeting over here, and winning one, he let his ninety and nine go. The mark of the Good Shepherd is that he not only goes after the one that's lost, but he doesn't lose his ninety and nine while he's doing it. That's the Good Shepherd we've got here. That's the one. That's the Good Shepherd before us. And our Lord said, “I am the Good Shepherd.”

One of the distinctions of the Gospel of John is the concentration of those great statements of our Lord that begin with the words, “I am”. You will find them in this book as you will not find them elsewhere. “I am the bread of life.”³ “I am the light of the world.”⁴ “I am the good shepherd.”⁵ “I am the resurrection and the life.”⁶ And you can go on through. “I am the way, the truth and the life.”⁷ And you will find them all the way through this book, these great affirmations, commencing with the words, “I am the bread of life.”

2 John 10:11

3 John 6:35

4 John 8:12

5 John 10:11

6 John 11:25

7 John 14:6

I want there to just pause for a moment to point out to you another of the distinctions of the Gospel of John, and I'm starting right here because you can see it particularly clearly at the beginning of Chapter 9 and also the beginning of Chapter 10. You will notice this about every chapter, or practically every one in the Gospel of John - almost every chapter begins with some dark picture of human need. Here it is, the dark, dark picture of human need. And then, as if stepping through the curtain, you find our Lord suddenly appearing, the answer to the need, the light for the darkness, the answer to the question. You find him stepping through.

In the first chapter of John, you notice that dark curtain again. We talked about it before, notice it again. "He came unto His own and His own received him not."⁸ "He was in the world and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not."⁹ "And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not."¹⁰ The darkness, the curtain, and then through it steps our Lord there. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."¹¹ And He steps through, the light for the darkness, the life for the death, and so on.

When you get to the beginning of Chapter 2, you've got the same thing. The picture in the center of the wedding of Cana of Galilee was not just the happy moment, there. It was a very dark picture. It was the dark picture of a host and hostess that had failed to provide adequate entertainment for their guests - an unpardonable sin in an Eastern land. And this was the dark curtain, and through it our Lord stepped to turn water into wine.

When you get to the beginning of the third chapter you've got Nicodemus and his darkness, and the Lord steps through. You've the Woman of Samaria, and our Lord steps through the darkness and tells her about living water.

The beginning of the fifth chapter, you've got another picture of darkness there - the man 38 years sick, and our Lord steps through. And you've got another crowd, thousands of them, hungry on the hillside, and the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and our Lord steps through - the bread of life.

You've the darkness in the seventh chapter, of the opposition of the Jews and those who had threatened to do him harm, and through it our Lord steps and says, "If any man thirsts, let him come unto me and drink."¹²

In the beginning of the eighth chapter, you've got the woman taken in her sin, and through the dark curtain our Lord steps. "I am the light of the world."¹³

And you can see him all the more clearly because of those dark backgrounds that the Holy Spirit seems to have deliberately placed there, in order that we might see, in all of His loveliness, this matchless

8 John 1:11

9 John 1:10

10 John 1:5

11 John 1:12

12 John 7:37

13 John 8:12

picture of our Lord. A photographer would put a background somewhere, somehow, if he was going to take a picture of you. In order that he might take the photograph to the best advantage against the background of some kind, he would take your photograph and the Holy Spirit has done exactly the same thing in the Gospel of John. Look at the man born blind, and through it our Lord steps. Look at this sheepfold, menaced by the robber, and through it you see the Good Shepherd giving his life for the sheep.

Turn to the eleventh chapter of John, and you find the same thing. What is He in the eleventh chapter of John? We don't have to look, do we? We know what He is because He tells us what He is. "I am the resurrection and the life."¹⁴ And of all the dark pictures where our Lord steps through to bring light and liberty and happiness and life, surely this is the darkest of them all. There isn't any other picture that's as dark as this.

This is not the first time we find our Lord in contact with death. We've seen him there before. We saw him there in a room where a little girl, twelve years old who had just died, just moments before. When that servant ran down the hillside to meet our Lord and his master and say, "Don't trouble Jesus anymore, the little girl is dead."¹⁵ And she'd only gone just a few minutes. He'd been in the presence of death before.

We watch him there with the son of the widow of Nain. He'd died maybe that morning, or the night before, and was now being carried out, for they had to do that right quick in Eastern lands, and still do. Just a little while, but this was something different, wasn't it? This was something different. This was a case where death had had her horny hands on this one for four days, until not only death was there, but the ultimate of death, disintegration. Corruption was there. No longer could it be covered up. And here He stands in the face of this impossible thing, this awful thing. There our Lord steps through and says, "I am the resurrection and the life." And if he hadn't named Lazarus by name, every grave that had hold a believer would have opened up right then. If He had simply said, "Come forth," without naming that man in there, every grave holding a believer would have opened. Every last one of them. He had to call him by name to make quite sure who He was calling out of the grave. If He'd simply given the clarion call, "Come forth," every believer would have come forth. For that one, and He is the resurrection and the life.

Look at Him in chapter twelve. You find here that the shadows are darkening and gathering around Him. We're getting now toward the end of the life of our Lord. These last few days were gathering in, by the end of this week He will be gone as far as the crowds are concerned. They will have taken his dead body down from the cross within a few days of this, and here on this day, the day we call Palm Sunday, here on this day our Lord rides into Jerusalem on the colt, the foal of an ass. And here he is riding. You know what happened. The crowd that gathered there and shouted "Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."¹⁶ Here He is, palm branches in the way, cloaking in the way. Everybody shouting. Why? Why did they get so excited about that? Was it just because they saw a man riding into Jerusalem on a donkey? Oh, no. Not at all. Not at all. They could have seen that any day. That was a common enough sight to see a man riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. There was

14 John 11:25

15 Luke 8:49

16 Luke 19:38

nothing extraordinary about that.

But here was somebody, and in the midst of the crowd there came this consciousness - this is the somebody riding into Jerusalem on an ass. Why did they say, "The somebody?" Why did they think that way? Why did they cheer about Him? Because they recognized in this act, by this one, the fulfillment of an ancient prophecy that had been spoken hundreds of years before, where the prophet looking down through the veil of the years had said, "Your king cometh riding upon the foal of an ass. Watch out when you see this. This is the way he'll come."¹⁷ And those Jews recognized the fulfillment of their ancient Jewish scriptures that we call the Old Testament.

And let me remind you, that they knew them a whole lot better than we do. One of the things that we ought be thoroughly ashamed of ourselves for, is that we now have a completed Bible, not a partial Bible like they had. All they had was the Old Testament, but every last Jew knew that Old Testament a hundred times better than we do under grace when we've got the whole Bible before us. They knew their scriptures under the Law a whole lot better than we do under grace, which is to our disgrace. We ought to know it like they did. They recognized it immediately. Over and over again you can see things where a fulfillment of prophecy flashes before the eyes of a crowd and they instantly recognize it. They knew their book. They knew their Old Testament scriptures, they sure did. It's a pity we don't understand ours a little better.

But here it was, and our Lord there by the side riding into Jerusalem. And you find out what He is. He is Christ the King. "Behold, your king cometh." You don't have to look to wonder what He is in that twelfth chapter of the Gospel of John. You know that was the moment when, if there was any moment needed, when His death warrant was signed right there and then. He signed his own death warrant when He rode into Jerusalem, while those who were in opposition to Him, those who were dead set on destroying Him, when they saw this and heard the crowd, they gathered together and they said, "The crowd will take him by force and make him a king. We've got to do something about this and do it at once." And they did. It was only a little while afterwards, until Judas could feel the itching of those thirty pieces of silver in his miserable palm, and the machinery was moving. And within a few days our Lord was upon that cross.

In the thirteenth chapter of John, you find our Lord and his disciples entering into that upper room and here we ought to take our shoes off, don't you think? The ground whereon we stand...

(audio ends)

¹⁷ Zechariah 9:9