

John 8:21-30

Later Jesus said to them again, “I am going away. You will search for me but will die in your sin. You cannot come where I am going.”

²² The people asked, “Is he planning to commit suicide? What does he mean, ‘You cannot come where I am going’?”

²³ Jesus continued, “You are from below; I am from above. You belong to this world; I do not. ²⁴ That is why I said that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am who I claim to be, you will die in your sins.”

²⁵ “Who are you?” they demanded.

Jesus replied, “The one I have always claimed to be. ²⁶ I have much to say about you and much to condemn, but I won’t. For I say only what I have heard from the one who sent me, and he is completely truthful.” ²⁷ But they still didn’t understand that he was talking about his Father.

²⁸ So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will understand that I am he. I do nothing on my own but say only what the Father taught me. ²⁹ And the one who sent me is with me—he has not deserted me. For I always do what pleases him.” ³⁰ Then many who heard him say these things believed in him.

Background

These verses take place in the Temple courts in Jerusalem about six months before the crucifixion. Jesus had just declared, “*I am the light of the world*” (v12). Remember that God revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush as “I AM.” So the Lord Jesus was making a claim to deity. In the Gospel of John, there are seven “I AM” statements with a predicate (e.g., “I am the Bread,” “I am the Door”) and seven absolute “I AM” statements that claim deity. Three of these are in John 8 (v24, 28, 58).

Jesus reveals His omniscience in verse 28 as He refers to His coming crucifixion, resurrection, and exaltation. Jesus was indeed “lifted up” on the cross, and His divine identity was revealed through the supernatural events that followed: darkness, an earthquake, and the tearing of the temple veil. Even a Roman centurion declared, “*This man truly was the Son of God!*” (Mark 15:39).

Teaching Points

1. There is no second chance for salvation.

In John 8:21, Jesus warned the unbelieving Jews: after His resurrection and return to Heaven, they would not find His body **or** their Messiah. Thus, they would die in their sins. He made it clear

that there's no second chance for salvation. Reject Him and remain eternally separated from God.

Verse 21 says, "...*you will die in your sin*" (singular), and verse 24 says, "...*you will die in your sins*" (plural). Sin (singular) refers to our sinful nature. Sins (plural) are the resulting actions. Without Christ, a person faces eternal separation from God (Hebrews 9:27).

2. There is no second way of salvation.

In verse 24, Jesus warned that unless people believe He is God and the Messiah, they will die in their sins. Jesus is the only way to God, fulfilling God's promise from the beginning. The idea that "all roads lead to God" is false. Only through Jesus can anyone be saved. All other paths lead away from God.

Application

1. Don't miss your "window of opportunity."

The phrase "window of opportunity" means a limited time to act. If you're not a Christian, you have a limited time to receive Jesus as your Savior. Jesus warned unbelievers that if they reject Him, they will die in their sins and cannot follow Him to Heaven. Don't miss your chance! Accept Jesus as your Savior today before the opportunity is gone.

2. Don't "unload" everything at once on the unbeliever.

In verse 26, Jesus said He had a lot to say, but spoke only what the Father directed. He didn't overwhelm His listeners with all truths at once, showing sensitivity to timing. We should follow His example. When sharing with unbelievers, we shouldn't "unload" every heavy doctrine at once. Instead, be patient and guided by God's timing and the listener's readiness.