

Introduction:

Don't you just love fine print. Whether it is a weight loss ad, an investment opportunity, a medication, they always get around to the fine print. They show you 10 people with amazing results. If you use our product, this is what you'll get. Then the fast-talking guy comes in to read the fine print our government requires them to say to have actual truth in advertising. "Individual results may vary." Sometimes they'll even say, "Testimonial is not typical. Individual results may vary." Of course, if it is some commercial for medicine it includes all kinds of potential side effects, some of which seem even worse than what the medication is supposed to resolve. It always leaves me with the feeling, "If I'm one of the lucky ones, I can get this product and lose weight." "If I'm one of the lucky ones, I can invest in this opportunity and hit the jackpot." "If I'm one of the lucky ones, I can take this medication and get good health." However, I'm so rarely one of the lucky ones. These things just don't work out for me. Because on so many of these things it just isn't up to me. Sometimes you can take the medication just like the doctor says and still be sick. Sometimes you can invest just like the accountant says and the market crashes. Sometimes you can use the product just like the instructions say and not get the results promised. It's enough to make a fellow jaded, distrusting, cynical, and negative, which certainly doesn't help you become one of the "lucky ones." Then we come to Jesus and we hear about salvation. We begin to wonder, "Could I be so lucky? What makes me think I'll be one of the lucky ones? What makes me think I can actually be saved? Why even bother?" We look around at all the people around us in church and we are sure they are lucky ones, but it won't work for me. I can't make it. I'm not one of the chosen few. I'm not one of the lucky ones. Testimonials are not typical. Results vary. Do you ever worry about that?

I'm here this morning to tell you that in Jesus Christ, results do not vary. If you believe what Jesus says, you get what Jesus promises every time. It doesn't matter if you're white, black, Hispanic, Indian, rich, poor, college graduate, high school dropout. It doesn't matter if you have been a goody-two-shoes or a murderer. It doesn't matter if you have been a great spouse or a philanderer. If you believe what Jesus says, you get what Jesus promises every time. And here is what that means. Do you want salvation? The choice is yours. The choice is not your parents. The choice is not your genetics. The choice is not your college's. The choice is not even God's. The choice is yours. How do I know? Paul says so in **Romans 1:16**. Paul was unashamed of God's gospel because it is His power unto salvation for "everyone who believes." Not for some people who believe, for everyone who believes. The results do not vary. If you believe what Jesus says, you get what Jesus promises every time. Think about this. We can be unashamed of the gospel because it is unlimited. It is for everyone and does the same thing for everyone. It isn't limited to a chosen few, to a lucky elite. It is for everyone. Paul isn't the only who says this. John, one of Jesus's original apostles also says this exact same thing in **John 3:16-21**. Let's crack open this passage and see that you too can be saved. The choice is yours, results do not vary. If you believe what Jesus says, you will get what Jesus promises every time.

Discussion:

I. "For God so loved the world..."

- A. This is not a contradiction with biblical passages that say we aren't supposed to love the world. Here, John is not referring to worldliness, worldly things, worldly outlooks, or worldly behaviors. He is actually referring to the inhabitants of the world.
- B. What does God love? The world. Every part of the world. Not Israel. Not Rome. Not Greece. Not America. He doesn't love the white world, the black world, the first world, the third world, the educated world, the ignorant world. God loves the world. He loves the world and everyone in it.
- C. Do you see what this mean? He loves you. He loves you exactly the same as He loves everyone else. God doesn't love someone else more, choosing them for salvation, but leaving you out in the lurch. He hasn't bestowed His love on the person next to you and then skipped you. Results don't vary with His gospel from person to person. Results won't vary for you. If you believe what Jesus says, you will get what Jesus promises every time. How could it be otherwise, He loves you.

II. "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world..."

- A. Sadly, a lot of people have the idea that God is out to get them. He's the giant boogie man in the sky. It doesn't help that too many parents have raised their kids with threats like, "God is watching you." "You can hide it

from me, but you can't hide it from God." Obviously, there is truth to those statements, but it leaves the idea God is up in heaven just waiting for opportunities to zap people into hell.

- B. God doesn't want to condemn people. God doesn't want to condemn anyone in the world. He doesn't want to condemn you. He wants to save everyone in the world. He wants to save you. He wants to save you so badly He sent Jesus, God the Son, into the world to die on the cross for you. Let me ask you, does it make any sense that the God who would sacrifice His Son on the cross for your salvation is on the side fine-printing you into hell? Does it make sense to think that God is actually playing games with you? Does it make sense He is giving you a gospel and instruction that works for others, but won't actually work for you? Of course not. Yahweh God wants you saved. He is giving you a gospel that works every time. If you believe what Jesus says, you get what Jesus promises every time. The choice is yours.

III. "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already..."

- A. So, here's what it comes down to. What will you choose? John is clear. He does not say, "Whoever Jesus chose is not condemned." It says, "Whoever believes in him is not condemned." Further, whoever refuses to believe in Him is condemned already.
- B. Brothers and sisters, friends and neighbors, this is God's plan. It is for whoever. It is not for the chosen few. It is for any and all. But you must believe. In this verse, John is building on what he said just a page earlier in **John 1:12-13**. Jesus gives the right to all who believe in His name, to all who receive Him the right to become children of God. Everyone who believes. All who receive. God places no limits. The choice is yours.
- C. At the same time, this adds another side. If you don't believe what Jesus says, you will get what Jesus promises every time. However, Jesus promises the unbeliever condemnation. And that is what will happen every time.

IV. "And this is the judgment:..."

- A. But there is variety, isn't there? Not everyone is saved. John wants us to understand very clearly, the variance is not with God. God doesn't vary. The gospel doesn't vary. The results don't vary. Rather, the response varies. Despite the consistent nature of the gospel, people respond to Jesus and His gospel differently.
- B. Some people love the light; some people love the darkness. Some people run to the light; some people run from it. Some people do what is true; some people do what is false. These distinctions make clear what it means to believe what Jesus says. I can only claim to believe what Jesus says when I do what Jesus says. I can't claim to be a believer while consistently keeping Jesus at arm's length. I can't claim to be a believer if I'm bartering with Jesus about which of His instructions I'm actually going to follow. I can't claim to be a believer by merely giving mental assent to Jesus and then doing whatever I want. I believe what Jesus says when I do what He says. In fact, look just a few verses down the page to **John 3:36**. "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him" (ESV). There it is, obedience is part of belief.
- C. It shouldn't surprise us to see Paul, the author who talked about the gospel as the power of God for salvation to all who believe in **Romans 1:16** had said in **Romans 1:5**, that his duty as an apostle of Jesus, that is as one sent by Jesus, an ambassador of Jesus, was to bring about the obedience of faith.
- D. No, neither John nor Paul were saying be perfect and you'll be saved. But they were saying you can only claim to believe what Jesus says when you submit to what Jesus says. But still, if you believe what Jesus says, you get what Jesus promises every time. Results do not vary. The choice is yours.

Conclusion:

The atonement of Jesus Christ is not limited by God or by God's gospel. God has chosen to send His Son into the world with the love, grace, and power to save the whole world. The choice is yours. Results do not vary. God's gospel is unlimited. Will you accept it? Will you come to the light? Will you receive Him? Will you surrender to Him?

Will you believe Him? I'd like to close with what Jesus had taught a man named Nicodemus just before the passage we've been studying. Nicodemus came to Jesus by night to find out more about Him and Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (**John 3:5**, ESV). It is no coincidence that the very next thing we see happening after this night time teaching in **John 3:22** is Jesus having His apostles baptize those who would follow Him. These were folks who believed Jesus, so they obeyed Him. Will you? Will you believe in Jesus? Will you receive Jesus? Will you gain the right to become a child of God being born of God in baptism, being immersed in water and raised up full of the Spirit of Jesus Christ? Remember, results do not vary. If you believe what Jesus says, you will get what Jesus promises every time. The choice is yours.