Introduction: This week our study of John’s gospel takes us to a third witness of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you have been here the last two Sunday’s you have been shown the witness of a faithful person; John the Baptist as an example of how our witness should be lived. Last week you were shown the witness of a fruitful life as an example of how or witness should be recognized. Today the Lord will show us a witness as the work of His word and how it should and should not be handled in our life. The word of God is the theology and doctrine of the Church. Having said that, I feel it is time to refresh your understanding of Church. I choose to begin by discussing what Church is not. It is not the name of a building or denomination. Those do identify us socially and culturally, but that is for the most part the extent of their use. Neither is it a gathering place to impress upon others our numerical influence or social standing. So, the Church isn’t a place we come to, then what is it. Church is who we are! Spiritually speaking you cannot become a member of the Church by a majority vote. I understand how that remark will upset many people, but based on God’s word it is true. You become a member of the Church by regeneration through being born again by grace through faith in Jesus Christ as a result of His shed blood. It is biblical practice to join a likeminded group of believers in fellowship through the public testimony of Baptism by immersion. That is why and how we distinctively set ourselves apart as Baptists, we recognize it as a New Testament Church necessity. Because of regeneration the New Testament Church is also known as the Body of Christ. If you are not identified by the Lord as part of His body you are NOT part of the Church. So how does this identify with today’s message? I’m glad you ask! It is through the word of God, our Bible, from which we are spoken to by the Holy Spirit, convicted of our sin and called to repent and become regenerated through Jesus Christ. As a regenerated born again believer we are instructed from the word of God about our worship and service to the Lord. So this morning I want to show you three things from the passage we have read. Notice with me…

# The work of the word is not vanity.

God’s word isn’t intended to glorify the Church!

God’s word doesn’t provide us with a work or behavior that redeems us!

# The work of the word reveals the Son of God.

God’s word, from Genesis to Revelation, testifies of Jesus Christ!

He was present at creation.

He was present at Adam & Eve’s redemption.

He was present at Noah’s ark and their salvation.

He was present on Mt. Sinai with Moses.

He was present at the feast of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit birthed the Church.

He is present in the lives of every born again believer

The word of God manifests itself through the regenerated lives of born again believers!

The Lord reveals a profound fact concern the depravity of man. We will not come to Him, notice with me in verse 40

# The work of the word convicts us of spiritual need.

If we want eternal life it is necessary for us to respond to the call of the Lord Jesus Christ!

If that is so profound and obvious why does it seem so difficult?

Self-righteousness.

The love of sin.

The idolatry of religion.

Pride ( we deserve eternal life because…{we may not say it or think it but})

As I prepare to close this morning will our musicians come and prepare a hymn?

Conclusion: In conclusion what do we walk away with this morning? I will briefly outline two things that I believe should stand out in our lives. **First**, the word of God should speak to you and me personally. By that I mean it should direct our heart to a personal relationship with God through His Son Jesus Christ. Yes that means answering the Holy Spirits call to salvation, but it doesn’t stop there. The word of God should shape the life of every believer. This shaping comes from a desire to be close to God. Does the word of God establish in your heart the desire to get closer to Him? **Second**, the word of God should speak through us. Every born again believer is expected to live in a manner that testifies to the holiness of God! Being regenerated as a born again follower of Jesus Christ we are new creatures. Old things are passed away and all things become new. Are they? When family, friends, co-workers or anyone for that matter sees you today do they see a new person, or the same old person you were days or decades ago? Is the person outside of the church building the same person that is inside the church building? I have heard it said when I am in the church I respect God, okay, why don’t you respect Him outside of church? The work of the word of God should speak to others through your life, this includes your words, deeds, thoughts, actions, decisions and behaviors; every aspect of life! There is word in the Bible that is either abused or ignored very often. This word is liberty. Liberty is broadly defined as freedom from restraint. We have liberty to make decisions, are your decisions honoring the work of the word of God? This morning as we close if God is dealing with your heart will come?