

A summary of John 18:28-40

1. **Is the word of God fulfilled in our lives? (v.32)** In v.32, and also in v.9, the Greek for “word” is **logos**, which is the constant, or unchanging, or written word of God. Every word in the Bible is **logos**. It can never be changed, and every word has either been fulfilled (for example, many prophecies concerning Jesus), is being fulfilled, or will be fulfilled in the future (Matthew 5:18). When Jesus was on the earth, the word of God (all the prophecies concerning His birth, His human living, His relationship with His disciples, and His death and resurrection) were fulfilled or accomplished. How were they accomplished? Not automatically, but because Jesus lived on every word (**rhema** word) of God (Matthew 4:4). In order for the **logos** or written word of God to be accomplished by Jesus in His living, He had intimate fellowship or interaction with the Father. Thus, the **logos** word became **rhema** to Him. As a man, He listened to every word (**logos**) of God, experiencing it as **rhema**, so that the **logos** word could eventually be fulfilled. What about us? Do we have such a testimony? For example, in John 16:23-24, Jesus tells us that whatever we ask the Father in His name, He will give it to us. Do we ask the Lord concerning the church, concerning brothers or sisters? Do we pray specific prayers? Do we know that our prayers are answered? If we ask in a general way, the Lord will answer, but perhaps in a general way, and we may not even know that He has answered. We may not have a clear testimony of how the Lord answered, and our faith may not increase much. However, through our specific prayers to the Lord for people, or for the Lord to bless the church in a certain way, some of the **logos** word in the Bible may be fulfilled in our lives.
2. **Do we pay close attention to the speaking of brothers and sisters in order to find the Lord’s speaking?: John 11:49-53;18:14.** Caiaphas was the high priest, a religious person, who was involved in the trial of Jesus and His being put to death. The entire trial of Jesus was a mockery and an injustice, and Caiaphas was heavily involved. Most of his speaking was nonsense (Matthew 26:59,65), with the intent to destroy Jesus (Matthew 27:1). However, he did speak one aspect of the truth, namely that it was necessary for one man to die for the people in order for the entire nation to be saved. This was a prophecy (John 11:51), according to the Scriptures (the Bible) and according to the Spirit, though probably declared unconsciously and with an impure motive. A similar example of such a kind of speaking is that of a donkey whom God used in the Old Testament to speak to the prophet Balaam (Numbers 22). What does this mean for us?
 - a. Do we pay attention to the speaking of brothers and sisters, even if much of the speaking may not be in spirit, or not that “high” or “rich,” in order to grasp the Lord’s speaking, even if it may be a very small percent? The Lord can speak through any person, regardless of whether that person may be in spirit or not, pure or impure. Do we have such a heart to treasure the Lord’s speaking, even when such a speaking may be surrounded or covered by layers of nonsensical speaking?
 - b. If, in our speaking, the life of God does not grow, then our speaking may be in the principle of that of a donkey. For example, we may not spend much time with the brothers and sisters, we may not serve people in the church life, we may not preach the gospel, we may not praise the Lord on Lord’s day morning, or offer corporate prayers with the church, or even participate in the financial grace offering, and therefore we may not know the Lord that well, nor the Christ in the saints. But we may think we understand the Bible, and try to explain certain things. Caiaphas is exactly like the donkey in Numbers 22. Such a realization may warn us that we do not really understand the word of God, and may elevate us to come to the brothers and sisters more and more, and to exercise to praise the Lord, to pray specific prayers and to preach the gospel. As we live the church life, the Lord may begin to speak to us in the Bible, and our speaking may grow to become a testimony of who the Lord is in our daily life.

3. **Are we living in the kingdom of God or in the world (the kingdom of Satan)?:vv.36-37.** The kingdom of God is a domain ruled by God, where there is protection, support and leading (God's leading). Practically, the kingdom of God today is the church life (Romans 14:17). The world is a domain ruled by Satan (the prince or king of this world). 1 John 2:16 says: ***For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.*** In this verse, we see three aspects of the world: the material or sinful world (***the desires or lust of the flesh***), the soulish or psychological world (***the desires or lust of the eyes***), and the religious or spiritual world (***the pride of life***). For example, we may have a job. What domain are we in? We may go every Sunday to the bread breaking meeting. Are we in the religious world, going out of religious duty, or are we living in the kingdom of God? How can we know if we are living in the kingdom of God? In John 18:37, Jesus says that He came into the world to bear witness to the truth. Therefore, our education, our job, our family, our possessions, are for Christ and the church. In everything that we do, or engage in, in our human life, do we bear witness, or testify, of Christ, in our daily living?
4. **Do not be involved in politics:vv.33-40.** Pilate, the Roman governor, was a politician. He knew Jesus was innocent (v.38). Yet, instead of freeing Jesus, he offered the people a choice as to which man to release: Barabbas or Jesus. This was the epitome of corrupt politics and compromise. Politicians make a lot of compromises to please different people, in order to win votes and favor. We should not be involved in politics, or even in debates concerning different issues. For example, which is better: democracy or dictatorship? The answer to this question is the simplest: neither, but the church life, or the kingdom of God, is the best! As believers, or as the church, our responsibility is not to support or condemn this regime or that regime, or this cause or that cause, but to
- a. pray for people in high positions (1 Timothy 2:2)
 - b. in order that we may live a peaceful and quiet life. We should pray for governments and leaders, but all our prayers must be for God to rule over all the governments and leaders and decisions in order that His testimony can advance, churches can be raised up, and people can be saved and grow in the church life, so the Lord Jesus can return. A quiet and peaceful life is one where Christ is the source and goal of our joy and peace, resulting in a visible testimony of Christ lived out in our daily life and in the church life. This is the kingdom of God on this earth.
5. **Do not fight back or rebuke:vv.33-40.** Jesus did not rebuke Pilate, although He dialogued with him. In answering Pilate's questions, Jesus sought to open Pilate's eyes concerning the real kingdom (of God) and the real king (Jesus). Every question of Pilate was an opportunity for Jesus to preach the gospel and unveil the truth. Yet, in all of Jesus' answers, here and elsewhere in the gospels, Jesus never rebuked the high priest, the chief priests or Pilate. He did not even rebuke Judas, His betrayer. How then can we rebuke or condemn brothers and sisters? Rather, we should pray for them, not pass judgment. It is so easy to criticize this brother or that sister for the kind of clothes they are wearing, their hair style, or make up. It is not so easy to testify or bear witness of Christ to others. Do we speak to others in love (testimony), or out of law (judgment and condemnation)? Do we tell people what to do or not do, or do we testify for the Lord? Do we judge our children? Yes, at times, we do need to exhort them, especially if they are doing something that may harm them or others. However, most of the time, we may be prone to judge them and criticize them. To testify is not easy. To testify Christ means that the ***logos*** word has become ***rhema*** to us, to touch our life. Such a word may then be spoken in love to others.