

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

This morning, we will be continuing our study through the gospel of John.

We will be in chapter 7 – so turn to John 7, put a bookmark there

And then turn to Luke 12

One of the things that I have learned in my 3 and a half years of being a pastor is that there are certain topics I could bring up that will divide the church.

I could bring up the temperature of the room

Right now, some people think it is cold in here and some people think it is outright freezing in here.

I could bring up favorite sports teams –

I could make the statement that hands down, In N Out have the best burgers or that pineapple does not belong on pizza

I could bring up issues pertaining to what's going on in the news or politics – jab or no jab

And people will automatically choose a side and some may even choose to be indifferent.

However church, outside of these walls – all you need to do is bring up the name Jesus Christ – and there will be immediate division in that conversation with that individual.

You can talk about Buddha, you can talk about Confucius, you can talk about Oprah and any New Age mumbo jumbo – but the minute you insert Jesus Christ into the topic – there will be division.

Why?

Because truth always divides.

When Jesus says - "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

What was He doing? He was bringing division between those who live for Him and those who don't live for Him.

Those who choose to accept Him as the Way and the Truth and those who reject Him as the only way of salvation.

[Luk 12:49-53 NKJV] 49 "I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 "But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished! 51 "Do [you] suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. 52 "For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. 53 "Father

will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

What is the reason for this division – for the sake of truth

Jesus said - [Luk 11:23 NKJV] **23 "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.**

So we can among the group who say “yes” to Jesus or be among the group that says “no” to Jesus

Or we can be among those that say the following -

“I don’t have anything God – I am not really for Him and I am not really against Him, I just want to live my life the way I want”

According to Luke 11:23 – you have already made up your mind to be in the group that says no to Him –

There is no neutral ground with Jesus Christ

He is truth incarnate and truth always divides.

And that is what we are going to see in our study this morning – that wherever Jesus went – He continued to bring division.

Let’s pray...

In our study last week, we saw Jesus' unbelieving brothers trying to give Him worldly advice.

“Jesus, if you want people to know that you are the Messiah, if you want to win the crowds back - You need to stop running around the backwoods here in Galilee - You need to reveal Yourself at the feast of Tabernacles – You need to go to Jerusalem where all the people are.”

And Jesus told them that He was going to go to Jerusalem – on God's time – not the world's time.

So at the end of our study, Jesus' brothers went to partake of the Feast and when it was God's time – and in response to the Word of God (Deut 16:16), Jesus went up to Jerusalem to observe the Feast – and John told us that He did it secretly.

Why did He do it in secret – because it was not the right time for Him to do it.

Church, it is important to note that -

Jesus goes to Jerusalem, according to the Father's way, the Father's will and the Father's timetable.

This is exactly how we are to live our lives.

We are not bound to man and the pressures of man – but we are bound to God and He leads us by His Spirit.

[Jhn 7:11-31 NKJV] 11 Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, "Where is He?"

Once again, the Jews here, refers to the religious rulers.

They were waiting for Jesus to make an appearance –

Remember, they wanted to kill Him. We saw this in our study last week.

The word that is used here for sought – implies that that there was a continuous intense search for Him.

They know Jesus has to make an appearance – because that is what the law commanded.

And because Jesus showed up without much fanfare – as He did it secretly, they are looking Him.

12 And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No, on the contrary, He deceives the people." 13 However, **no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.**

So right away, we see that at the feast – Jesus is the talk of the town.

The people in Jerusalem – the pilgrims who have gone up to observe the Feast of Tabernacles, they are murmuring among themselves in secretly about Jesus.

They were divided

You got two camps -

Some were saying He is good and others were saying He deceives the people.

But get this church, they were both wrong.

Jesus is not just a good man.

Sometimes when you witness to people – they will say that they have heard about Jesus and they consider Him to be a good man.

“So you consider Jesus to be a good man? Do you believe that He died for the sin of the world?”

Oh no, I don't believe that part???

Do you believe that He is God?

Oh no, I don't believe that part either???

Well if you don't believe that He died for the sins of the world or that He is God, manifested in the flesh – then He is a deceiver and not a good man.

Church, the truth is that Jesus is more than just a good man -

So the Jews are looking for Jesus

The people are murmuring about Jesus in secret –

Why is secret?

Because they are afraid of the retribution from the religious rulers.

You see, word had come down from the Sanhedrin that the subject of Jesus was taboo.

And in a few weeks, when we get to Ch 9 – we will see a man who was born blind, healed by Jesus.

And because he told people that Jesus healed him – he got “cast out” of the synagogue.

That is what the people were afraid of.

Now, I want you to notice that the people are murmuring – but notice that John doesn't tell us that the disciples are murmuring among them.

And the reason that they are not murmuring is because they had already made a conscious decision to follow Jesus.

Remember, as the multitudes were abandoning Jesus

Jesus asked them if they wanted to leave –

And Peter answered - **Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.**

And I believe there is a valuable application for us all in this.

If we want to avoid the murmuring that surrounds us, and we want to avoid the complaining that is around us, and if we want to avoid the gossip that comes our way and the slander that surrounds us – we need to stay close to Jesus.

It is very hard to gossip – abiding in Jesus

It is very hard to slander someone behind their back when you are close to Jesus

The disciples avoided the division in the city – by sticking close to Jesus.

As believers, we are commanded to avoid foolish and ignorant disputes (2 Tim 2:23)

You want to be a murmurer – hang out with murmurers

You want to be a complainer – hang out with complainers – you will soon be complaining about things you don't even care about.

You want to be a gossip/slanderer, then invite gossip and slander into your life.

That is exactly what these Jewish pilgrims were doing.

14 Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. 15 And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?"

Now, it is important to note that when it says that Jesus went into the temple – it is not talking about the central building that only the priests were allowed in.

It is talking about the courtyards that surrounded the main building.

There is no pulpit or pews –

So, Jesus began to teach and the people began to gather around Him.

And John tells us that the religious rulers marveled at this.

Jesus was teaching in a way that they never heard before.

And they are marveling because in their minds – they are trying to figure out how is that He teaches this way without going to seminary school – without having any formal training.

You see Jesus taught with authority.

When you read the sermon on the mount –

Jesus says, you have heard it say....”You shall not commit murder or you have heard it say you shall not commit adultery, but I say to you...” (Authority)

The rabbis didn’t and couldn’t teach like that because the authority was not given to them. All they could do was teach “Thus says the Lord”

Jesus also taught with clarity.

He taught in a way that everyone understood – even the uneducated.

In fact, Mark 12:37 tells us “And the common people heard Him gladly.”

They marveled at Jesus and it is encouraging that later on, these same religious rulers would marvel at the way that some of Jesus’ followers taught as well.

Acts 4 – Peter and John were accused of being uneducated and untrained men – they were simple fishermen – yet they spoke with boldness and they marveled as if they were not worthy of being men speaking and teaching on behalf of God.

Church, because of the empowering work of the Holy Spirit, the minute after we become born again, we are capable of sharing the love of Christ with others

The Holy Spirit dwells in us and is our teacher and will lead us into all truth.

He will illuminate the scriptures we do not understand.

God can use uneducated and untrained individuals, He can use educated and trained individuals.

It’s the Spirit of God and the presence of God and the anointing of God that matters.

Church, Jesus didn’t claim to be self-taught; He claimed to be God-taught, practically inviting His listeners to examine His teachings according to the Scriptures.

16 Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. 17 "If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or [whether] I speak on My own [authority].

If you are really serious about knowing God and doing the right thing, then you will pay attention to the things that Jesus says. You will realize that Jesus is teaching you the right things about God.

We can will to do God's will

You will begin to have discernment about what God has in store for your life and we will also know His timetable for your life

It is a promise from God

When we will - to do His will, we will find His will and we will know what true.

What Jesus is telling these guys is, if you would do the right thing, you will know what is true.

If you would get your head out of all the traditions and meditate on the Word, you would understand that everything I am saying is true and it comes from Him.

If you truly seek God, you will find Him.

This verse also provides an important insight into our study of the Scripture.

If we merely want to fill our heads with trivia to win Bible games, we'll not grasp the meaning of the text.

But if we come to our study of the Word with a heart that says, "What are Your instructions, Lord?" then we'll understand.

18 "He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.

Jesus is doing what He is doing here – not for His own glory. He is doing it to glorify God.

If it was for His own glory, He would have gone to the feast with His brothers and spent a lot of time talking about all the good things He's done.

But Jesus was trying to point people's attention to God, to the One who sent Him.

He is speaking of Himself here.

19 "Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?" 20 The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?"

Jesus here nails them on their hypocrisy.

They had no interest in doing God's will.

They had the law – yet they were not adhering to it.

The religious rulers wanted to kill Jesus –

The crowd – they didn't know that what the religious rulers were planning – so at first, some of them respond with personal attacks – you have a demon

Later on, we will see other personal attacks against Jesus – you are an illegitimate son. You are a byproduct of fornication -

The crowd thinks that Jesus must be paranoid or crazy for thinking that someone wanted to kill Him.

21 Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel.

Jesus is talking about the previous time He was in Jerusalem – when He healed the lame man.

Remember, the Jewish leaders got mad because He was breaking their Sabbath traditions, Jesus reasoned that since God didn't stop working on Saturdays, that God's Son wouldn't stop working on Saturdays either.

(Jn 5:18 NKJV) Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

Keep in mind, Jesus didn't break God's Laws in healing the man on the Sabbath. He only broke the human traditions that had been built up over the years.

22 "Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. 23 "If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath?

In the book of Leviticus – the law states

[Lev 12:3 NKJV] 3 'And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

All male children were to be circumcised on the eighth day.

However, what happened when a boy was born on a Friday???

If the baby boy was born on a Friday, then he would be circumcised eight days later on Saturday, the Sabbath, even if it meant performing work.

You see, when there was a conflict between keeping the Sabbath and circumcising a baby, the Jews felt that circumcision was more important, and they would break the Sabbath law in favor of circumcision.

There's a little bit of irony here.

Circumcision is an act that cuts a man in a very private place.

It causes a lot of pain.

Jesus didn't cut anyone. In fact, He healed a man.

It's as if Jesus is saying, "So you can hurt a man on the Sabbath, but you can't heal him?"

24 "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

Looks can be very deceiving – not everything is what it appears to be.

And if this is the only way we make judgments, then we are going to make a lot of mistakes in our walk.

How do we handle rumors?

How do we handle a "bad report" about another person?

Do we respond to personal attacks like those of the crowd?

Don't judge according to appearance – judge with righteous judgment.

They told Jesus He has a demon – that He was crazy and He responded with grace.

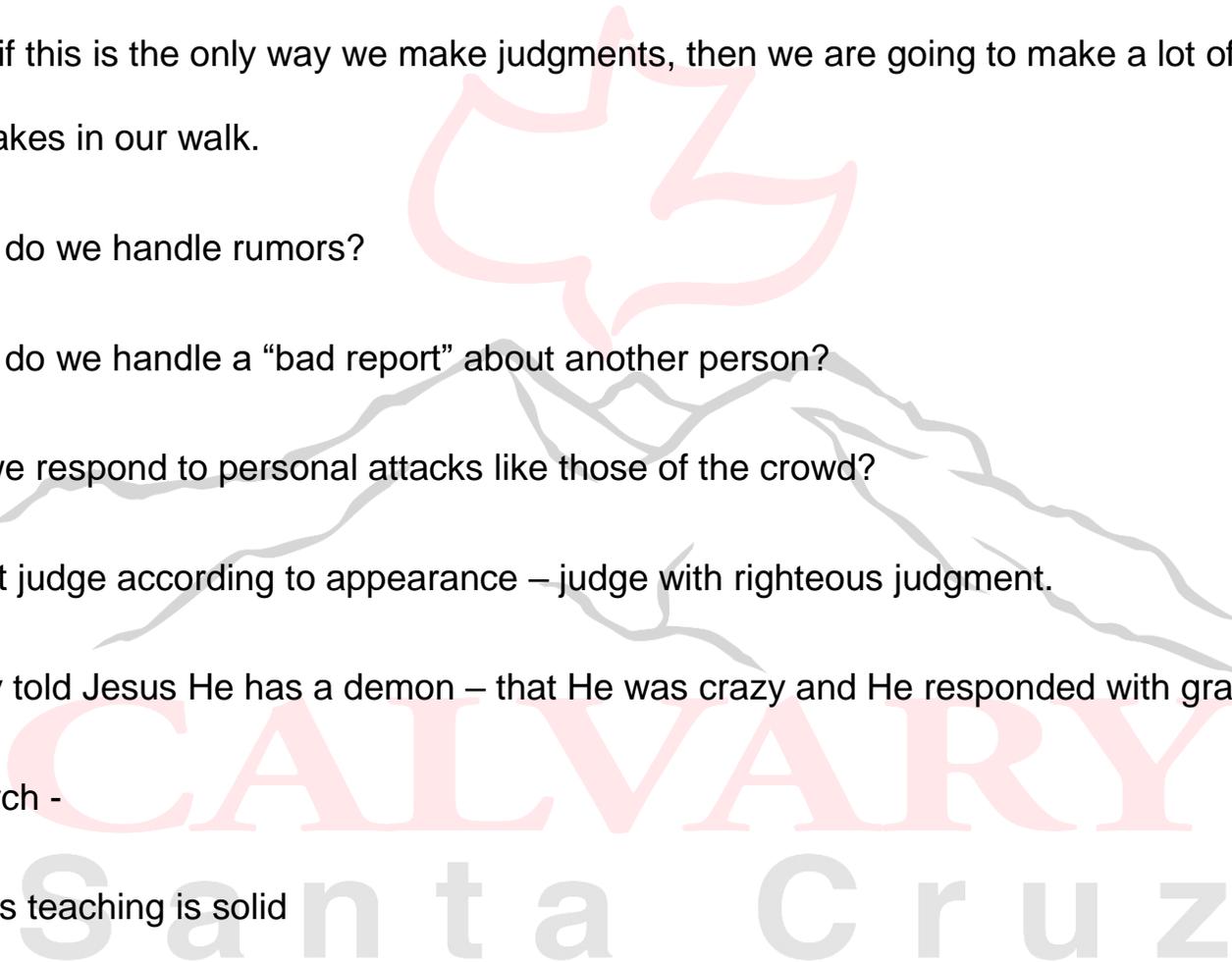
Church -

Jesus teaching is solid

His testimony is unchallenged

His righteousness is proven

And they still attack Him



Wouldn't we expect the same thing in our lives –

Where we are not completely righteous

Our testimony isn't completely perfect

And our teaching isn't always solid

If it happened to Jesus – then it will happen to those that follow Him

Be careful of those who don't want an answer, those who don't want to learn – be careful of those that simply just want to prove their point.

And I pray that we may bring everything to the Lord – that He may protect us from these types of arguments – that He guard us from judging according to appearance – and that we may trust Him in His righteous judgment.

Amen

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

How we judge others says far more about us than how we are judged by others. This is why God will judge us in the manner we judge others, not in the manner they judge us.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'