

Bibles???

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

Turn your bibles with me to John 12

We are continuing our verse by verse study through the Gospel of John

And this morning we are actually going to finish chapter 12

And I have been reminding us over the past few weeks that we have been in this chapter – is that chapter 12 provides us with a major shift in the ministry of Jesus.

It is in this chapter that the entire theme of Jesus' ministry begins to change.

Because up to this point, Jesus' ministry was a public ministry.

He has been teaching out in the open, He has been healing people out in the open, He has had the multitudes follow Him – He was making known the power and the message of God.

For three years He spent His time revealing Himself to the multitudes and to us – that He is God among us.

That He tabernacle with us

But all that changed at the triumphal entry –

Because it is at the triumphal entry that Jesus gave the multitudes the most important evidence of what kind of a King / Messiah He was going to be.

And we saw last week that the people, for the most part, rejected it.

“how can You say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’?”

Remember, Jesus was making one last plea to the nation and the religious rulers to accept Him as their Messiah and Savior.

And we ended our study last week with Jesus walking away.

Many of those in the crowd had already made up their mind about Jesus.

They had hardened their hearts to who Jesus is and the message He brought.

And we will see in our text today – that this rejection was fulfillment of God Word.

Let's pray...

I want to start our study this morning with a verse from the prophet Jeremiah.

[Jer 8:20 NKJV] 20 "The harvest is past, The summer is ended, And we are not saved!"

In its context – it refers to missed opportunities.

You see, God had delivered the Israelites from the bondage of slavery, He brought them into the Promised Land – the Land of milk and honey – a land of abundance,

He gave them the Law concerning how they were going to worship Him and how they were supposed to treat one another.

And the people responded by turning their back on Him and rejected Him. So God's judgment came upon them.

The day of grace had come to an end, the opportunity to be saved was over—their eternal judgment had been sealed.

The offer of salvation is available to every man, woman, and child, but here is the thing church - the offer isn't going to last forever—it has an expiration date (just like the milk carton in your fridge)

[Heb 3:7-8 NKJV] 7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice, 8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,

[2Co 6:2 NKJV] 2 For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now [is] the accepted time; behold, now [is] the day of salvation.

The day of salvation is that period in time when God's offer of salvation is still a reality—meaning, it is still active and valid

It's a period of time that is unique in each person's life—

It is a period of time that only God knows the length of

However, one thing we do know is that every time a person rejects Jesus Christ as their Savior it becomes easier for them to reject Him the next time the gospel is presented to them

And every time they continue to reject Jesus, their hearts get harder and harder

And for some individuals, the day of grace comes to an end, the opportunity to be saved will be over and their eternal judgment is sealed.

This is exactly what has happened to some that were in the group that Jesus was speaking to in our text last week.

Let's look at our text today – because we are going to see reason after reason as to why they rejected Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

[Jhn 12:37-50 NKJV] 37 But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, 38 that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"

I don't want you to miss the phrase "But although" – I had you make not of it.

John is making the connection to what is about to happen with the what came before –

And what came before (at the end of our study last week) was Jesus' last plea to the people of Israel.

[Jhn 12:35 NKJV] 35 Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.

The "light" is a reference to God's truth—but truth as embodied in the Person of Jesus Christ (who is "the Way, the Truth and the Life" John 14:6).

Back in chapter 1, John refers to Jesus as the true Light –

Jesus came into a world of darkness as the Light of God which alone could save man—but only if they "embraced" the Light (meaning – they believed in and received Jesus as their Savior).

And John tells us that Jesus came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

They rejected the light –

Jesus had preached the gospel to them many, many times over the course of His 3 year ministry—often performing miracles to validate that He had come from God the Father and spoke on behalf of the Father.

But even though Jesus had offered them so many opportunities to be saved—

they rejected God's 'light' - in the Person of His Son and in the truth He spoke to them

John tells us that the problem wasn't that Jesus hadn't given them ample evidence to believe in Him — it was that they refused to believe in Jesus no matter what He said or did!

The problem was hard-hearted unbelief rooted in rebellion—

That is why John quotes the prophet Isaiah – (Isaiah 53)

Because the same rebellion towards the word of God in Isaiah's day –

was now reigning in Israel against the Word of God made flesh and standing before them!

And if one continues to read Isaiah 53 – he actually tells us that part of the reason they didn't believe was because of Jesus outward appearance.

Remember, the triumphal entry – Jesus riding on a donkey – not what they expected the Messiah to be.

39 Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: 40 "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with [their] eyes, Lest they should understand with [their] hearts and turn, So that I should heal them."

Once again John is quoting from the prophet Isaiah – this time from Isaiah 6

It is another fulfillment of prophecy

Just like the Israelites hardened their hearts before the exile – in the times of Isaiah the prophet, the religious rulers have done the same.

Their hearts had become so hard – as they rejected the Light time after time, that there came a point in their life where they had no desire to see the Light

So what did God do?

God honored their wish

We see the same thing happen back in the Exodus to Pharaoh.

When Moses asked Pharaoh to let the Children of Israel go, we read that Pharaoh "hardened" his heart.

Moses keeps coming back over and over again, asking for the Children of Israel to be released, and Pharaoh keeps hardening his heart until there gets to a point where it's no longer Pharaoh hardening his heart, but God hardens it for him. (Exodus 9)

You see church, it's possible to harden your heart to the point where it's not that you "won't" believe, but you "can't" believe.

And that is what we are seeing here in John 12 – with some of the religious leaders.

God had to harden their hearts – because if He didn't, eventually they would have believed against their will.

41 These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

Turn with me to Isaiah 6

Since John is referencing this portion of scripture – I want to make sure that we grasp the verse we just read in John 12 – because it is an amazing passage.

[Isa 6:1-4 NKJV] 1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His [robe] filled the temple. 2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy [is] the LORD of hosts; The whole earth [is] full of His glory!" 4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

If we closely examine with what is said in John 12:41 and what we just read here in Isaiah 6 – we come to the conclusion that both of these scriptures speaks that Jesus Christ was the one who Isaiah saw in His glory.

John properly understood that Isaiah saw the glory of Jesus before His incarnation and that Jesus is Yahweh.

42 Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess [Him], lest they should be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

John tells us here in verse 42 - that some did believe in Jesus—but they would not

go public with their 'faith' because they were afraid the Pharisees would excommunicate them from the synagogue.

Remember, to be excommunicated meant that you would be cut off – not just the synagogue, but also your business – your way of life.

You were an outcast – like a leper.

We could say that these individuals were secret believers.

Nicodemus – during this time was a Pharisee

Joseph of Arimathea – Luke tells us that he was a member of the Sanhedrin

They believed in Jesus – but notice, they did not confess Him

They did not openly declare that they were followers of Jesus because they were more concerned with their own reputation – they were more concerned with what men thought of them.

Think about what Jesus said back in verse 26

[Jhn 12:26 NKJV] 26 "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him [My] Father will honor.

Church, there are many people in the world who desire the honor that comes from other men, more than the praise that comes from God.

And here is the thing church –

We can live for the praise of men or the praise of God – but not both.

Because what God values & what man esteems are 2 totally different things.

Turn with me to Rom 10

Sometimes people will say –

Can't a person just avoid a lot of hassles and trials by simply keeping their relationship with God quiet?

After all -

My coworkers don't need to know

My golfing buddies don't need to know

[Rom 10:9-11 NKJV] 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

Paul says that two things need to take place for a person to be saved:

1. You must believe in your heart

2. You must confess with your mouth

The best way to tell what's really going on in the heart is to listen to what's coming out of the mouth.

If your mouth is never telling people about your relationship with Jesus Christ, perhaps it's because it's not really in your heart.

[Mat 10:32-33 NKJV] 32 "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. 33 "But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

Jesus gives us two choices:

We're either confessing Jesus or denying Him.

There doesn't seem to be any middle ground.

44 Then Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. 45 "And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.

By the way – this is Jesus final message to the multitudes.

And what He is saying here is -

You Cannot Claim to Know, God the Father, Unless You Confess the Son.

And you cannot Know, The Son, unless you confess the Father

You see - All along, Jesus has been claiming that He was sent from, God the Father.

God had a plan to bring – “lost mankind” back to Himself,

And it involved sending His Son.

If a person rejects this idea, they are rejecting God's one plan for salvation:

[Jhn 10:25-30 NKJV] 25 Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. 26 "But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. 27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 "My Father, who has given [them] to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch [them] out of My Father's hand. 30 "I and [My] Father are one."

This was the message Jesus kept repeating to the people of Israel—

that He had been sent into the world by God the Father to be a “light”,

to light their way out of the darkness of Satan’s lies

and into the light of God’s truth—

And if they ever wanted to know what God is like – all they had to do was look to

Jesus.

That is why later on – when Jesus is speaking to His disciples –

He says

[Jhn 14:7-9 NKJV] 7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." 8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

46 "I have come [as] a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

The bad news - The world is in spiritual darkness.

The Good News - Jesus is the Light.

And because Jesus is the Light –

He makes it possible that we no longer have to live in darkness –

He makes it possible for us to have victory over sin,

Not only does He make it possible so that we no longer walk in darkness, as the Light

– He also gives us direction in life.

What's the first thing you do when you walk into a strange room, and it's dark inside?

You turn on the light!

Some people are searching for true direction in life.

Their lives are like a person trying to find their way in a dark room.

They don't know which way to go, what to do, and just keep bumping into things.

The answer? Turn on the Light.

Coming to Jesus turns on the light in our lives.

The more we grow in the Lord, the more things start to make sense, the more we are "enlightened".

And one way to turn on the light is by reading God and meditating on God's Word

[Psa 119:105 NKJV] 105 NUN.

Your word [is] a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

It is through His word that we know where are we stepping but also – it shows us the path that we should walk on – the direction.

The scriptures teach us that we should walk worthy (Eph 4:1), Uprightly (Isaiah 57:2), in the Light (1 John 1:7) and humbly (Micah 6:8)

None of these are possible without the word of God lighting our way.

47 "And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. 48 "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.49 "For I have not spoken on My own [authority]; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. 50 "And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."

I am here as God's representative

I am here to teach you the truth about God

I am here to show you God's love, God's mercy and God's grace

I am here to show you God's forgiveness

I am here, not to judge you – I am here to save you

I'm saying the things that the Father gave Me to say, believe My words

While you still have the opportunity – embrace the Light before you die and are condemned to eternal darkness.

No one, not a soul will be able to say that they didn't have enough chances or evidence to make the decision.

They rejected His words and on the Day of Judgement, Jesus will reject them

Today is the Day of Salvation -

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.

It has been said –

The best way to reveal the crookedness of one stick is to place a straight stick beside it.

Coming into the world as a Perfect Man, the Lord Jesus revealed the crookedness of all other men, by comparison.”

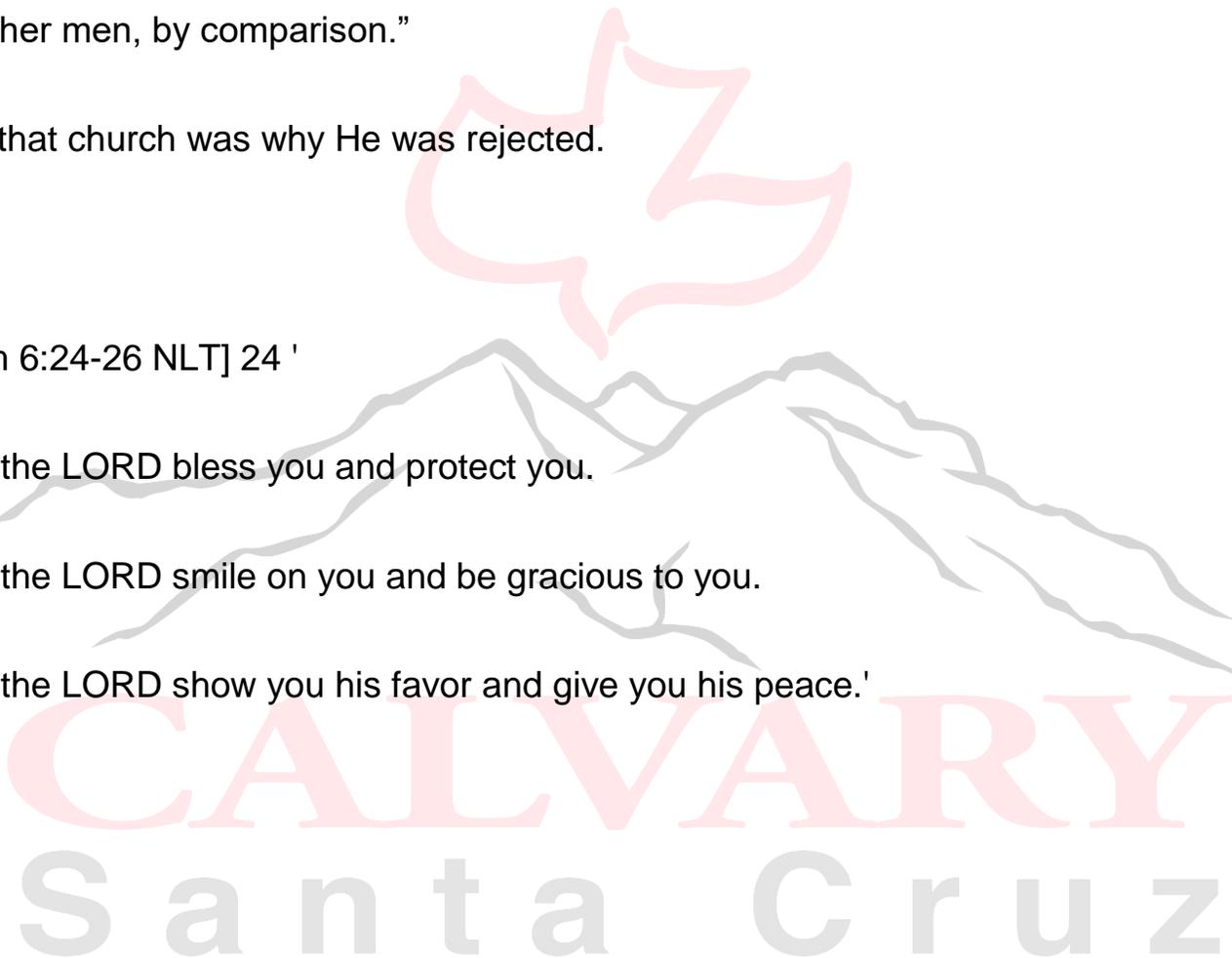
And that church was why He was rejected.

[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.'



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