



Sunday, February 14, 2021

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Gospel of John Series, Sermon #30 “The Answer that Stands for Eternity” John 8:12-30 (King James Version)

We continue our study in the Gospel of John. He’s an old man—the last disciple left on earth. It had been fifty years since he walked with Jesus in ministry. During that time, the walk he had with Christ percolated in his mind and God formed the picture of Christ in the story and Gospel of Jesus. As he sat down to write, John knew he couldn’t record every single word of Jesus’ ministry; he could only get the “high water” marks and the important moments in His life that would stand out so people would come to know Him. John wants the world to know Jesus as Lord and Savior (John 20:30-31).

Last week, our study revolved around one of the most memorable events in this Book—when Jesus met with a woman who was caught in the act of adultery. While the Jewish teachers of the law called for her to be stoned to death (Leviticus 20:10), Jesus stood by her. Each person holding a stone fell under the conviction that he himself was a sinner and let his stone fall to the ground. The crowd left, and the two were alone. Jesus told her “I don’t condemn you; I want to save you.” She calls Him, “Lord.” The moment she placed her trust and faith in Jesus the Christ, He forgave her. She was under a death sentence; did He forgive that? No, He took that upon Himself at the old rugged cross and died in her place. As she walks away—a new person humbled by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, He says “Go and sin no more. If I am truly your Savior, your life will be changed.” You cannot know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and not be changed. Your life, your walk, your outlook, your purpose will be changed! You’ll see that indeed He is your Lord, and your will is surrendered now to His will.

In John 8 between verses 11-12, that crowd walks away but another mixed crowd arrives to surround Jesus. Some come back to Him as their Lord and Savior; some come with questions; some come back because they continue to hate Him and want His death and destruction. He called the latter group out as fakes and false teachers; they had no connection with God. Sadly, the greatest enemies of Jesus were the religious leaders of the nation of Israel. They led in teaching the word of God to the people of Israel—scribes, Pharisees, and priests. But they were lost men. It’s still true today—some of the most respected religious leaders of the world will not teach Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. I would not want to stand before Almighty God and confess that I had disrespected, disregarded, and misled people not preaching Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world, the Son of God who will save any person who will come to Him in faith. These Jewish leaders hated Jesus because He exposed their fake lives, and they continued to seek to kill Him. Today, we’ll study a conversation that develops between Jesus and these religious leaders right after he forgave the woman. Let’s read verses 12-22:

“¹²Then spake Jesus again unto them saying, **I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.** ¹³The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. ¹⁴Jesus answered and said unto them, **Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence**

I come and whither I go. ¹⁵Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. ¹⁶And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. ¹⁷It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. ¹⁸I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me. ¹⁹Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, **Ye neither know me nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. ²⁰These words spake Jesus in the treasury as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come. ²¹Then said Jesus again unto them, **I go my way and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. ²²Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? Because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.”****

So, all kinds of people had come back and were hearing these words of Jesus the Christ. He proclaims a great truth about Himself, found in verse 12. He says they’re really only two kinds of people: those who have seen the light of God through the forgiveness of Jesus Christ His Son and those who know Him as Savior walk in that light. He has shown us forgiveness and has shed light on our sins. He’s given us separation and forgiveness from those sins, so we walk in that light which illumines our path right to the doorway of heaven. We’ll share eternity with the One who has forgiven us and given us life. The other type of people walk in the complete and consuming darkness of a cavern. The darkness and rejection of the Savior. The darkness of unforgiven sin. The darkness of an eternity which will be separated from the Savior. The people in this second group may have all the world has to offer—years of happiness, many possessions, ample money. But every day and every step away from Jesus the Christ, it brings them inches closer to eternal separation from God. Their path has no light and will end at one dark doorway—hell. There will be no turning back, no making another decision—this is the undiluted truth of God’s word.

As Jesus proclaims this truth of light and darkness, heaven and hell, the Pharisees continue to challenge Him. “You’re a fake, a liar, a false teacher. You’re a witness only to yourself as Savior. You’re the only one who’s proclaiming yourself as the Son of God.” In verse 14, He says “My witness is true. You won’t follow my witness and you will not hear me as your Savior. Today you serve as my judge; you judged me to be a liar yet the great I Am stands here before you. God in the flesh; your eyes are beholding and your ears are hearing the very truth of God’s word and you reject it. You refuse me through your own hatred and won’t hear what I have to say to you. Your hearts are so hard you cannot change.” Read verse 15. The world hangs on to this verse—Jesus is never going to be a judge, never going to judge my sin.

Jesus is speaking within a certain timeframe here. As He stood in that crowd, He was not their judge. He came to be their Savior. He came to give them the light of life. Earlier in the passage, He came to bring them living water. He told the woman caught in adultery “I don’t condemn you; I came to save you. At this moment, I’m not your judge. I want to be your Savior and bring you salvation, hope, light, and life.” Today, Jesus stands among us not as our judge but the one who wants to be the Savior of the world. No matter your color or nationality or how much sin is in your background, He still wants to be your personal Lord and Savior. He’s standing before you with open arms “Please come to me. I went to the cross and rose from the grave to give you forgiveness of sin and life eternal.” The invitation is yours—whoever you are and wherever you’re from. The day will come when He will be the judge of humankind.

In Revelation 20 we see a great and fearful white throne of holiness and judgment. Every rejector, belittler, curser, detractor, procrastinator of Jesus Christ will stand as a lost man or woman before that throne. As they stand before Him, they will see Him not with open arms but will see Him as the judge of eternity. John, the same one who wrote the Gospel, wrote the book of Revelation. Read 20:11-15 “¹¹And I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away: and there was found no place for them. ¹²And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened...¹³...and they were judged every man according to their works. ¹⁴And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” One day the unsaved world will see Jesus as the judge; today’s He not.

Remember, these Pharisees were saying “Jesus, you’re a liar because you’re proclaiming yourself as God.” Jesus goes back to the word of God; read John 8:17 again (this is a quote from Deuteronomy 19:15). Jesus says “The Bible says truth is established through two witnesses. I do witness to myself as God but I have another witness who joins by my side and that’s God the Father. My Father, the Father of the word you’ve been teaching. He stands with me in confirmation that I am the Son, the Savior, the Light of Life, and I carry the living water you need.” He said God the Father, maker of heaven and earth, is also a witness and I am His son. Jesus says to the religious leaders you teach the Jewish people the word of God day in and day out in the temple or synagogues but you don’t know God yourself. Lost men teaching the word of God—how misplaced that is and how utterly sad. Read 8:21. Here’s what I believe about the mind of God; it’s far behind our little human minds and to logically understand. The word of God says: Salvation is freely and fully offered to every single soul on earth. Every human being needs to be given the right and choice to choose Jesus; each must make his or her own decision for or against Him as Savior. In the omniscient, all-knowing mind of God He already knows the outcome. While this seems illogical, it does not take away the free will of every person to receive or reject Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Jesus tells these men that one day “You’ll realize I am the Son of God. You’ll know when you rejected me even as I stood with you and pleaded for you to know, but it will be too late for your decision. You will die in your sin and spend eternity in hell. I’ll be in heaven, and you will not be able to come to me.” They didn’t understand; read verse 22. Jews believe suicide always leads to hell. So, they said if He kills Himself we won’t see Him again because we’ll be in heaven. Jesus says exactly the opposite.

Let’s take a brief look at verses 23-30; I’m not going to read them all but will paraphrase. Jesus is repeating what He’s already said. He’s re-emphasizing that He came from heaven as the Savior, the Son of God. He reaffirms the lostness of the Pharisees. “²⁴**I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.**” ²⁸Then said Jesus unto them, **When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.** ²⁹**And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.**” Pharisees, listen, you’re calling for my death and have developed a plan for me to leave this earth through death. When your plan goes through and I die on the cross and am lifted up, when you finally see me in death, you’ll see me as God. Your hearts have been so hardened by your lies and lostness that you will not change. It will be too late for you. “³⁰As he spake these words, many believed on him.”

I ask all of you a very pointed question: If your heart stops within the next minute, would you go to heaven or hell? Those are the two destinies or destinations of every single person. The answer is based solely on your personal decision to have a relationship with Jesus Christ as your Savior, believing in faith He died on the cross to take your sin away and rose from the grave that first Easter morning so we would have eternal life. Do you have a relationship with Him? I'm not asking if you're good, moral, a church member—I'm asking if you have a relationship with Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. That was His question to the Pharisees "will you ever come to me?" Their answer was no. One day God Almighty will ask every person on earth the same question: Did you come to my Son? Did you accept Jesus as your Savior? Most of the world believes in some form of a God. The numbers far fall short if you ask do you believe in God through Jesus Christ your Savior. The Scripture says today God already knows your answer. If you've never made a decision for Him, He's waiting. He's not here to be your judge or condemn you; He's here to forgive you. Through His old rugged cross and resurrection from the grave, He's here to give you life. He's here to remove those sins as far as the east is from the west so that one day we'll never face Him as the judge. Much of the world will—those who reject Him as Lord and Savior. Today, in total honesty, if you don't know if you have Him as your Savior or say "I think He's my Savior" you need to make that right so you **know** He's your Savior. Maybe you've strayed off the path and need to come back home. Maybe you can say "Thank You, that You're my Lord and Savior. I will proclaim that to anyone as a witness that I belong to You." Today is the day to make that decision.

Let Us Pray: Our Father, our God, how serious these words are. I thank You last week that we proclaimed Jesus the Christ who forgave a woman caught in the most grievous sin and didn't condemn her. The word is still the same today: Jesus is not here to condemn us or judge that one who is lost. Wherever we are today, He's by our side to give us life, forgiveness, hope, purpose, heaven. I pray every person within the sound of my voice has made a decision to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. One day the world will see Him as judge, and we want to be with You as your children. Bless us now. Bless us as believers to reconfirm and recommit to You that You are indeed our Lord and Savior. In Jesus' name. Amen.