

Mount Olive Wednesday Night Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

October 6, 2021

John 15: 21 - 27

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. **22** If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. **23** He that hateth me hateth my Father also. **24** If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. **25** But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. **26** But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: **27** And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

Verse 21

But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

*Jesus has been talking about love and then about hate. Why hate? Because the people who did not love Jesus hated Him. They did not know the God of the Bible. Today lots of people say they know God, but their actions don't reflect that love. This is especially bad when this difference is shown by so-called Christians. It is a big turn-off to new people in a church when they see how differently people act outside of church. The church should be a hospital where we all get healed rather than a social club with rules and expectations.

Pastor Tom also noted that there is a specialness about being in church because we need one another. He then referred to the spirit that was present this past Sunday with Rebecca's testimony. You can't reenact that spirit.

Verse 22

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

[NLT version says: They would not be guilty if I had not come and spoken to them. But now they have no excuse for their sin.]

This verse scares Pastor Tom because of all the people he has encountered through weddings, funerals, church services where he preached the Gospel, all of these people are now responsible for their decision about what to do with the message of salvation.

*As this verse says, if someone has been exposed to the Gospel message (which is what Jesus certainly spoke) and they have not accepted that salvation, then they have no excuse when they come before God/judgement.

This is scary, mind-boggling, and should tug at our hearts. Jesus' mandate can't be changed: we must come to salvation through Jesus!

Verse 23

He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

*Hate is a strong word, a hard word. Why do we hate? Several reasons were discussed: because we hate God, because it is easier to be evil than to be good, because we want control/ we don't like giving God control, because even though God's mercy is great we don't want to follow His strict line.

Pastor Tom referred to Rebecca's testimony again from Sunday: She of all people would have a reason to be angry with God, but has resolved that anger to accept that God made her the way she is for a purpose.

Verses 24 and 25

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. 25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

*Verse 24 notes that Jesus was not only seen but also did works that no one else had ever done. And yet people still did not believe Jesus and actually hated Him and God.

*Verse 25 quotes both Psalm 35 and 69

Psalm 35:19 Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

Psalms 69:4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.

*Do you believe that Scripture is being fulfilled before your eyes?

Pastor Tom noted a study done by Focus on the Family: It showed that 50% of US pastors would do something different if they could and 70% feel they are less effective now than earlier in their ministries.

*Jesus said there would be a falling away in the last days. Is that now?

Pastor Tom went on to say that it is hard not to blame yourself as a pastor when people do not respond to God's calling through the Word preached. More statistics show that 30% of people stay committed to the church, 30% will stay somewhat committed when it is convenient, and 30% won't ever come back to church.

Another observation: When we were not allowed to gather for church during the pandemic, many people said, "I can't wait to get back!" but they still aren't back in church yet!

Verse 26

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

Pastor Tom reflected that for the past 2 Sundays we have definitely felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in worship services. Two weeks ago we held a 24 hour prayer vigil for the Celebration Sunday that paved the way for the Spirit to be present. Just this past Sunday Rebecca's spontaneous testimony allowed the Holy Spirit to testify to the congregation.

*How often do we ask God: What is next? What do we do now? We must now be still and be quiet to let the Holy Spirit speak to us. Krystal noted that the words silent and listen have the same letters and they are both difficult things to do!

Verse 27

And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

*This is us, too! We must witness Jesus with the Holy Spirit's presence within us for the witness to mean anything. Without that power, our witness is shallow and weak. The churches in Africa and Asia are growing because they are not distracted by other junk. They may be more attuned to the Holy Spirit than we are in the US. We must practice emptying out our agendas and junk before we come to worship so that we are ready/prepared to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

May the Lord watch between me and thee
While we are absent one from the other.
