

Mount Olive Wednesday Night Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

February 10, 2021

John 8: 48 - 59

48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? **49** Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. **50** And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. **51** Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. **52** Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. **53** Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? **54** Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: **55** Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. **56** Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. **57** Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? **58** Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. **59** Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Pastor Tom opened with praises, announcements and our lengthy prayer list. He then read our entire passage for this evening, reminding us that even though it sounds repetitious we must look for the subtleties within the text. Recalling from last week, Jesus was in dialogue with the Jewish Pharisees and Scribes. Jesus had just told them that they were not following God but they were following the devil.

Verse 48

Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

*Jesus' biggest conflict was not with the 'down-and-outers' but with the religious leaders. Noting the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, Pastor Tom described its beauty and elegance but the theology taught there was very different from what Biblical doctrine is. We may not even recognize the teachings there as coming from the Bible.

*The Scribes and Pharisees were supposed to be the protectors of God's Word in scriptures but they didn't do their job very well because they would use it and manipulate it to suit their needs at the time.

*A speaker that Pastor Tom heard said - "Will you be faithful to the Bible or will you faint away from the Bible"

*Jesus told the Jewish leaders that they were not of God but being used by the devil. Have you ever known someone who doesn't even know it but they are being used by the devil? Their actions and sayings are not reflecting the Word of God. We really need to pray for our country's leaders at this time because they are making questionable decisions that bother us and scare us.

*The Words that the Scribes and Pharisees heard from Jesus were not easy to hear. Has God ever spoken to you through the Scriptures but it was not an easy word to take in? But the message was clear and not up for debate... just stop doing what you are doing. The Jewish leaders took offense to what Jesus said - you are of the devil, you have a demon.

*The leaders' reaction to these disturbing words are in verse 48: calling Jesus a Samaritan. The subtle meaning of this is that the Jews thought the Samaritans were less than them. They looked down upon the Samaritans. The leaders also said that Jesus had a devil /demon in Him. This is ironic because Jesus is God and they were then calling God the devil.

*The racial issue here in our country is still not resolved. How different the world would be if we lived by the words 'Do good unto all people, especially those in the household of faith.' What if the church was a true example of this! How different the world and our country would be.

*Back to the National Cathedral. Janet Parshall, who said we must be faithful or faint also asked - How many churches have acted on keeping the Word (being faithful) or have fainted away by changing the Word to suit/line up with social/cultural beliefs? Do you believe it's going to be more difficult as time goes on in our country? What will the consequences be?

*Karen Eppley noted: There has been a subtle change in our laws over the years. What used to be a Judeo/Christian basis for our laws has now changed toward laws that do not line up with our beliefs. (Examples: same sex marriages, abortions)

*If we try to change God's Words, we are in trouble because the Bible does not change. We will be in friction/conflict with one another and with God Himself. Pastor Tom noted in his daily Bible readings he recently read in 2 Samuel that God does not tolerate changes in His Word.

Verses 49 - 51

Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. 50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. 51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

*Jesus answers them with 3 points:

1. Honor - verse 49
2. Glory - verse 50
3. Promise - verse 51

The honor and glory go to God but the promise in verse 51 goes to us: Anyone who does not have hope in everlasting life, does not have hope in Him. But if we hope in Jesus' words(sayings) then we will have everlasting life.

Verses 52 - 53

Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. 53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

*Now the Jewish leaders answer back that Abraham and the prophets are dead, game over. Death is the end. Done.

*IF this is true, it would be more comforting than the reality of the torment of hell after death. (Of course, this is not true.) In the case of someone committing suicide, they may think that it is just an end to their misery in life, without contemplating that there is an afterlife to deal with.

Hebrews 11: 13 - 16

13 *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.*

*This text addresses the OT saints who died before Calvary. God gave them a vision, a hope. These saints looked forward to Jesus, while we look back to what Jesus did at Calvary. The OT saints desired a better heavenly country(or city)

Revelation 21: 1 - 6

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. 6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

*This is the vision that God gave to John but also to the OT saints. We hear it referenced each time we pray the Lord's Prayer...thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. This is the vision and promise of a city given to the OT saints.

Verses 54 through 57

Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: 55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. 57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? 58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

*These verses deal with the divinity of Jesus, that he could see Abraham even though he is already dead but in heaven because of faith in God. The Jews scoffed at this and didn't understand how Jesus, not even 50 years

old, could have known Abraham. We can again refer to 1 Corinthians 1:18 about the foolishness of divine things to those who do not believe. And as John has often referenced the words of Jesus in this Gospel, "I am." Jesus is the great and divine, I am. The Jews would have known the weight these words carry.

Verse 59

Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

*It has infuriated the Jewish leaders that Jesus is able to do this. It is a mystery how Jesus hid himself and walked out right past them.

*Susie Bourdess noted: Throughout the Bible angels have been seen by some but not others. Jesus could do whatever He wanted to do. He could have called 10,000 angels when he was on the cross.

*Sherri's recent readings described the intricacies of the Temple explained in the OT. Everything had to be just perfect. Just as it has to be just the perfect time for Jesus to go to the cross and it will be the same perfect timing for His return.

*Pastor Tom referred to a song about Jesus' perfect timing in raising Lazarus from the dead..."He was 3 days late but still on time!"

*Another mystery is when He will return. We do not know the future but Jesus does. We just can not take life for granted. We must remember that each day is precious.

Pastor Tom then opened the lines so we could all say goodnight.

Goodnight!