

Mount Olive Wednesday Night Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

December 9, 2020

John 7: 25 - 31

25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? 26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? 27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. 28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. 29 But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. 30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. 31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

Pastor Tom explained that tonight's study would be a slightly different format. Rather than going verse by verse, he will read the entire passage and then analyze it as a whole section.

This section is an ongoing attack of who Jesus really is.

We know the Evidence of who Jesus is is becoming more than the people can dispute. There is no way to explain the miracles other than they are divine in nature.

However, whether Jesus is growing within this scripture passage or if He is growing in us, there will always be opposition. As we grow in faith in God, that inevitable opposition will cause division amongst the people. Scripture tells us that in His first coming, Jesus would not bring peace; husbands against wives, brothers against brothers.

The same thing is happening today: the division is magnified. It is greater than ever before. And it is not just within the world but also amongst believers as well.

God does not have to prove who He (Jesus) was...He says 'I am who I am'. Yet He does - He is the perfect example of Love, leaving Heaven to come

to Earth for us to live and get out of bondage to sin. But the ones He came to save have rejected Him. Yet He continues to Love.

In the text for tonight, it was a known fact that people wanted to kill Jesus and those rumors spread out to the feast. People knew this and the division began.

“Do these rulers know that He might really be the Christ? We know where He came from but He doesn’t fit the mould we want him to.”

If we only want God to answer 911 crisis prayers, we are praying wrong. God needs to be present in our lives all the time.

Pastor Tom spoke with Mary Ann Rowe: She said this current crisis is separating the sheep from the goats. The true believers from the pretenders.

Jesus defends Himself here and the opposition ramps up, going after Him. But they just cannot get their hands on Him. Something is stopping them. And we have that same protection as well. Even now the true church cannot be stopped. Even in this controversy there were those who came to believe! And nowadays while some people fall away from church, there are some who believe.

Staying with just the facts from a Biblical viewpoint:

1. Physically - No matter what you have heard, the virus is real, there are people sick and dying. It becomes way more real when it begins to affect our own loved ones.
2. Financially - This time of year (Christmas) always highlights those in need of resources. Some churches find themselves in financial distress because some incomes have been cut off due to the virus. People are not giving when they cannot come to the church for services.
3. Mentally - Depression, loneliness, substance abuse, suicide are more prevalent during this pandemic and particularly during the holidays.

These are real facts. There is an undercurrent in the church today - church meaning Jesus' representatives today - when there is opposition to the Gospel we need to look at -

1. The source of the opposition
2. How the opposition uses pawns in its attack

The Voice of the Church is being silenced. It was stated in scripture that prior to Jesus' 2nd coming that there would be a falling away.

2 Thessalonians 2: 1 - 3

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;”

When the people start turning their back on their faith, this opens the door for the arrival of the antichrist.

As COVID-19 drags on, the church is falling away.

The text we've been studying in John corresponds to Matthew 24:24 -

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”

There are false teachers and prophets whose words will be so great that even the elect will stumble and fall.

In John 7:26, when the people are asking “Do the rulers know?” These are the elect who have fallen away.

Our present day leaders of the Church seem to have fallen away - not all but some in authority have fallen away from the true Word of God.

John 8:44

“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

If we are Biblical in nature, we recognize the devil as the source of opposition, the Father of lies. Lies so good that the believers can be deceived by them.

We must be diligent as stated last week from 2 Timothy 2: 15 - 16

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.”

Our only defense against deception is the Word of God.

When we accept Jesus into our hearts, the Holy Spirit moves in providing discernment on holy things. We still need to be knowledgeable in the Word to affirm or back-up the Holy Spirit's discernment. This could mean moving from 'baby food' to 'meat' in our study of the Word because we cannot live and thrive on 'baby food'. “The Daily Bread” is good but we should be delving into the Word more than that one or 2 paragraphs a day.

Pastor Tom related that he is needing to make decisions based on what the 'experts' are telling him. His question has been, 'can I trust them'? Even with a strong faith, it is still a struggle to know the truth. We must remember that the only source of Truth is the Bible.

Back to John 7:

The mystery is that the Jewish leaders could not lay their hands on Jesus. And just like that mystery, the Gospel cannot be suppressed. Even the rocks will cry out if the people do not praise God. Hitler and Communism both tried to silence the Gospel but still it flourished and grew. Even back to the Early Church which was under much persecution, it flourished and grew.

So while many may fall away (and our hearts break for them) and most of us have someone in our own families who have, we must have the hope that many will come to Him and believe even in these times. We must choose to be the Lord's arms, feet and mouth and be a part of the revival or we choose to be silent.

The condition we are in now will try and test our human side (hearing only the negative, anger, greed, depression, loneliness and even death) will tug on our human nature. But when we fight with the Word and the Holy Spirit and through prayer, remembering that the devil is already defeated. We don't have to defeat him, we are only instructed to resist the devil and he will flee! Praise be to God Almighty!

Pastor Tom opened the line for comments. Connection had a lot of interference coming in so we ended our session.

Thank you and goodnight to all!

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