

The Saving Word Is the Judging Word

John 12:44-50

Reading: Genesis 2:4-9

Bethany Baptist Church

June 6, 2021

...pray...

Please join me in John 12:36-50 (read).

This morning we are examining a *turning point* in the Gospel of John.

Chapters 1-12 document Jesus' *three-year public ministry* to Israel.

A *ministry* offered and rejected. A *Messiah* offered and rejected.

John concluded these 12 chapters with a *theological explanation* of Israel's rejection of Jesus (36-43) followed by a *summarization* of Jesus' teaching (44-50).

Israel *rejected* Jesus because they didn't want a crucified Messiah. Israel *despised* Jesus, and in judgment Jesus *hardened* Israel.

John cites Isaiah (vv.38, 40) to explain why Israel rejected their Messiah, and Jesus judged His own people.

V.38 (Isa 53:1) – *Whom has believed our message?*

Practically **no one** in Israel (*He was despised and rejected by men*)

So, Messiah *judges* His own people...

v.40 (Isa 6:10) – *He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts.*

But what about Jesus' words here in vv.44-50...?

Since Jesus *stopped preaching* and immediately *hid Himself* from the Jews in v.36, it seems John has *imported* a short sermon from another occasion (*before v.36*).

He has carefully placed it here, as the *last note* in the *first half* of His gospel, to leave us with a *reminder* of Jesus' three years of preaching.

His *message* and His *mission*...

How did Jesus' *summarize* His mission?

- 1. I am *God's Son*.**
- 2. I offer *life*.**
- 3. I do not *judge* (but judgment is real).**

Jesus is God's Son

1. Early in Jesus' ministry He *angered* the Jews by *curing* a man on the Sabbath. This old, disillusioned man had been ill **38** years.
 - a. In response to the Jews' *criticism* Jesus appealed to the *constant good* that His Father does throughout eternity.
 - b. 5:19,20 – “*Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing.*”
 - c. One commentator compares God's Son *watching* His heavenly Father doing good, throughout eternity, to young Jesus of Nazareth *learning* carpentry in Joseph's shop.
 - d. Can we reverently think of the Father *preparing* the Son to *send* Him into the world?
 - e. And the idea of “*sent*” is *all over* Jesus' message (in our text, in all of John).
 - f. V.44 – “*Him who sent Me*”; V.45 – “*the One who sent Me*”; v.49 – “*the Father Himself who sent Me*”; (similarly) V.50 – “*I speak just as the Father has told Me.*”
 - g. Jesus' emphasis on being *sent* underscores that He is God's Son, *sent* on His Father's *mission*.

2. Further, Jesus was sent by the Father Himself with a *message*.
 - a. *Plagiarism* is *stealing* someone else’s message (writings) and *passing it off* as your own! Not Jesus! Our Lord was very careful to give His Father the *full credit* for His message.
 - b. So Jesus says (49) “*I did not speak on My own initiative.*”
 - c. In other words, Jesus did not *come* and did not *speak* apart being *sent* by the Father and being *dependent* on the Father for His message.

3. Which teaches us that the Son was in *submission* to His Father.
 - a. In v.49 Jesus says the Father has given Him a *commandment* concerning *what to say* and *what to speak*.
 - b. The idea of “*commandment*” here suggests a *set of instructions*.
 - c. ?Can we say that Jesus was *briefed* in eternity past before He was *sent* to redeem His people?
 - i. V.49- “*the Father Himself has given Me a commandment*”
 - ii. So, v.50 – “*I speak **just as** the Father told Me*”
 - d. Jesus’ ministry was guided by *submissive obedience* to His Father.

4. Jesus’ many claims to be *sent, submissive, obedient* teach us *crucial truths* about the Christ!
 - a. He is **God’s Son** (His claims are frequent and explicit).
 - b. He is, therefore, *eternal* (e.g., the image of the Father’s workshop).
 - c. If Jesus is **God’s Son**, *eternal*, then He is **God! 2X**
 - d. **5:18** – (back to our Sabbath healing account) – *For this reason the Jews were seeking **all the more** to kill Him, because He **not only** was breaking the Sabbath, but also was **calling God His own Father**, making **Himself equal to God**.*
God sent His Son, they called Him Jesus...

And Jesus was *sent* to offer eternal life.

1. What does God want you to *do* with Jesus this morning..? What is the fundamental “*condition*” for salvation? **Faith**...to *believe* in Jesus.
 - a. V.44 – “*He who believes in Me*”; v.46 – “*Everyone who believes in Me*”

2. What does Jesus *promise* if you *believe* in Him?
 - a. Faith in Jesus *restores* your relationship with God. To *belong* to the Son is to *belong* to the Father.
 - i. Every man and woman is born *estranged* from God by *sinfulness* and *sin* (nature and action). Our *fall* (estrangement) was *earned, judged* and *pronounced* in the Garden (Gen 3).
 - ii. Jesus came to *restore* your relationship to God!
 - iii. **Read v.44.** You can paraphrase this: “*He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me **alone** but in Him who sent Me.*”
 - iv. Jesus goes on to promise (45), “*He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.*”
 - v. The vocabulary of “*seeing*” (45) suggests far more than a *glance* or *casual look*, it pictures looking *long* and *hard*, *beholding* God.
 - vi. Remember Moses? “**Show me Your glory!**” One writer comments, “*When you look hard on Jesus, by faith you see the Father.*”

- b. Faith in Jesus *delivers* you from *darkness*.
- i. Jesus makes a claim about *Himself* and about *you*. He is *Light*. Without Him, you *live (abide)* in *darkness*.
 1. **OT** writers pictured Israel's exiles as *those living in darkness*.
 2. **NT** writers picture the lost as being *imprisoned in a domain of darkness* (Col.1:13).
 3. The *overlord* of that darkness is Satan!
 4. *Darkness = lostness*.
 - ii. But Jesus' promise is this (46): "*I have come as Light into the world, so that **everyone who believes in Me** will not remain in darkness.*"
 - iii. John introduced this truth from the start of His gospel (1:4, 5) – *In Him was life, and the life was the **Light of men**. The **light** shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.* 1:9 – *There was the **true Light** which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.*

3. Jesus drives straight to the point in v.47(b) – “*I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.*” ... “*I ...came...to save the world.*”
- a. You are *estranged* from God. Jesus says *know Me, know God...see Me, see God.*
 - b. You *abide in darkness*, but Jesus offers you *light*.
 - i. **12:35** – “*For a little while longer the Light is among you.... While you have the Light, **believe** in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.*”
 - c. Again, the only *condition* Christ requires is your *faith*.
 - d. John will soon *bring his story to a close* with this invitation in **20:31** – “*These things have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have light in His name.*”

Jesus says to all who believe in Him, “*I came to save the world.*”

I warn of judgment! Jesus did not come to *judge*, but Jesus' coming brought *judgment*. (Read vv.47-48)

1. In the context of John 12, Israel has just been *handed over for judgment* for rejecting Jesus!
 - a. Isaiah had prophesied that that they would reject the *Suffering Servant* and their *eyes would be blinded* and their *hearts hardened*
1. The Bible says we live in a *binary world*: you are either *lost* or *saved*!
 - a. The *saved* have been justified through faith in Jesus.
 - b. The *lost* will be judged because of their sin.
 - c. Jesus is *doubly clear* (47,48) about the condition of the man/woman who faces God's judgment:
 - i. V.47 – “*If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them*”
 - ii. V.48 – “*He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings*”
 - iii. *Lostness is this: hearing but not obeying; rejecting and not receiving.*
 - d. The *lost* are characterized by *intellectual rejection* (Jesus, teaching) and *moral disobedience* (hearing but not obeying).
 - e. Paul calls lost men and women “*sons of disobedience.*” **Col 3:6** – *because of these things the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience.*
 - f. *A non-Christian is not simply an unbeliever, as if all Christianity is, is a set of truth claims to be evaluated, picked through, and rejected in part or in whole. A non-Christian is an unbeliever **and** an unbeyer!*

2. But Jesus' primary mission in His first advent was *saving*, not *judging*. He clearly says (47) "*I did not come to judge the world.*"
- a. Yet there *will* come a day when Jesus will judge!
 - i. Paul preached in Athens: [**God**] "*has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all by raising Him from the dead.*"
 - b. But for now, if Jesus does **not** judge, what **is** the *criteria for judgment*?
 - c. His *word* – His *message*. **Notice again v.48 (read all)**.
 - i. "...*the word I spoke is what will judge...*"(2X) Jesus' *teachings* will judge His *enemies*.
 - ii. To *reject* Jesus' words is to *invite* eternal judgment.
 - iii. What teachings of Jesus are increasingly *rejected* today?
 1. *Exclusivity*. "*I am the way the truth... no one...*"
 2. *Sin*. If everything is relative then what is sin...?
 3. *Repentance*. Repenting is inconvenient and hard on your self-image!
 4. *Following*. Many prefer prosperity over cross-bearing.
 5. *Hell*. Many even in the church deny hell, ignoring its necessary connection to God's holiness and justice.
 6. *Forgiveness & love of neighbor*.
 7. *Personal holiness*.
 8. *Biblical marriage & sexuality* (all kinds of issues!)
 9. Against that short list, let's **read v.48** again!

3. Then Jesus identifies the *authority* of His message, which in turn identifies the *authority* of all judgment. (**Read vv.49-50**)
 - a. “...**for**...” (49) indicates the *reason* Jesus’ words have *judicial authority* is because they are the Father’s words.
 - b. We’ve come back to Jesus’ *sent, submissive, obedient relationship* to His Father.
 - i. Jesus’ *words* were God’s *words* – given to Him by His Father.
 - ii. God’s *commandments* are instructions that guided Jesus’ *message* (v.49–*what to say and what to speak*) and His *mission*.
 - iii. They are words of *eternal life* and *death*. They are words of *justification* and *judgment*.
 - iv. Jesus **wouldn’t** *think* of altering them by even one *jot* or *tittle*! “*I speak **just as the Father has told Me.***”

So Jesus came as a *Savior*, not a *Judge*. But, the *words* of God, in the *words* of Jesus, have the *authority* to judge every woman and man in the *last day*.

And they will.

How do you *condense* the three most *incredible years* in human history!?!

The *miracles* and *teachings*, *death & resurrection*, of Jesus of Nazareth!

Jesus is **God’s Son** – which means He’s **equal to God**.

God sent His Son to offer **forgiveness** and **eternal life to** all who *believe* in Him.

God will **judge** you if you **reject** His Son.

...*pray*...

I Lay My Sins on Jesus

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