

Shibboleth or Sibboleth?

Book of Judges

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Bible Text: Judges 12:1-7

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If you will, take your Bibles and look with me in Judges 12 and I want us to read from verse 1 down to verse 7 and an interesting title taken from this portion of Scripture and it's simply "Shibboleth or Sibboleth?" That might not mean a whole lot to you to begin with in this message but I trust that by the end it will and you'll see why that title, just a little change in two words, shibboleth or sibboleth and how important is the difference. So we'll read here in Judges 12, beginning with verse 1,

1 And the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and went northward, and said unto Jephthah, Wherefore passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? we will burn thine house upon thee with fire. 2 And Jephthah said unto them, I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon; and when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands. 3 And when I saw that ye delivered me not, I put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the LORD delivered them into my hand: wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight against me? 4 Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites, and among the Manassites. 5 And the Gileadites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; 6 Then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand. 7 And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

What a phenomenal story that we have here of a quarrel between the Ephraimites and the Gileadites and the person of Jephthah. This wasn't the first time that we've seen this sort of response. If you remember when we were studying back in Judges 8, these same Ephraimites rose up against Gideon so here we have Jephthah, again, as a picture and

type of the Lord Jesus Christ and Gideon a type of the Lord Jesus Christ and going out to deliver his people and we've got these Ephraimites who were of the nation of Israel and yet opposed to Gideon and here, again, we see opposed to Jephthah. So what can we draw from that? Well, not all those that are of Israel are Israel. Just like not all those who necessarily attend the place of worship where the gospel is preached at necessarily the Lord's. Sometimes we have a feeling that we're all kind of the same mindset and doctrine, if you will, or the Lord himself brings these things to light in his time and so that's one thing that we're going to see here but in Judges 8, you can see these same men of Ephraim, this was their characteristic. They were war-like.

"Why hast thou served us thus?" they said unto Gideon, "that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him sharply." So what kind of people would these represent? We're going to find out here in this study that there are those that appear to be brethren and yet when push comes to shove in the heat of the battle, we find out that they are actually found fighting against the very one that they profess to know. But another lesson that I see here in this particular chapter is what we read here in verse 6, the difference between shibboleth and sibboleth. People we run into say, "You know, you make too much to do about doctrine and detail. Can't we just get along?" Well, here's a man trying to get across a river and they say to him, "Pronounce the word shibboleth," and as you know when you're from different regions of the country, as you're brought up you get used to pronouncing words a certain way and it's not going to be on the spot that you're going to be able to switch. "They caught me," because he was pretending to be one of them and when he couldn't pronounce the word, you talk about seriousness, they took him and slew him right there at that very place where he was trying to get across the river to escape for his life. So it begs the question: is detail important? Particularly in this matter? Are there life and death issues with regard to what we profess and what we say or not? We'll try to answer this by God's word.

I believe that what we're going to see here is that this does teach us how important every detail, every doctrine, especially as it pertains to the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, this whole insurrection began against Jephthah, one of the Lord's anointed. Is it possible for people to hold this Bible and to profess to know Christ and yet when he's preached in truth, they find fault with him? They find fault with those who exalt him and preach him and glorify him? Absolutely. So what do we say about these? Well, they just see it from a different way or is a life or death issue? We're going to see here that it was a life and death issue. Any slight deviation from the truth of the gospel does matter.

So let's go back and look first of all at these that oppose him. I would compare this with those who confess to be the Lord's and yet cavil at his teaching that gives him all the glory in salvation. Isn't that really what their subject matter was? "Why is it, Jephthah, that you didn't consult us, that you didn't bring us in on this? That somehow we could share the glory with you?" Isn't that the bone of contention really between what's true and false with regard to the gospel that all the glory belongs unto the Lord? But men will cavil to that teaching and say all the while, "We still know him as our leader but we're just not going to say that he does everything." So then you sit and listen to them and

what they're really after is some of the glory. "I like to think that man's will has something to do with this." That's the way they reason.

But I'll tell you what, just as here, it was no light matter. The lines were drawn over this with regard to Jephthah and he went to war, he went to battle. There are some that will tell you, "Well, we ought not to divide over these things. A man can just say that he believes that Christ came and died for sinners, let's just leave it at that. Just don't get into too much of the detail. Let's not get into the shibboleth and the sibboleth," is the way that men reason. But oh, how we need to be careful. My question is this: why would any who are truly the Lord's have an issue with any doctrine that gives Christ all the glory? And that's a good comeback to people that begin to kind of hedge and waffle and do the old bobble-head. "Well, it could be this way. It could be that way." Dance back and forth on each foot. Put it back on them, "What is your issue?" The preaching that God judges no man but he's put all the judgment in the hands of his Son or that this matter of salvation, do you really want to find out what somebody believes, ask them that. "Is there any part of salvation," these are just simple questions, this is the shibboleth and the sibboleth, "is there any part of salvation that pertains to man?" Especially when you hear some say, "Well, God doesn't repent for you. You've got to do the repenting. God doesn't believe for you. You have to do the believing." Do you think in any way that a sinner's repentance or faith in any, even a nano-part, comes from man other than the Lord giving it to them? We just read about it in Philippians 1, the fruits of righteousness. That's repentance. That's faith. That's that which his righteousness that he worked out at Calvary and God wants for all put to the account of his people there. What you're seeing and the believing and repenting is the fruit. The fruit doesn't bear itself. So even there, these questions have to be asked.

So the Scriptures warn us. That's the only conclusion I can come to is why would any who are truly the Lord's have any issue with any doctrine that gives him the glory? They won't. So you say, "What will we do with those that do have an issue?" Well, Scripture calls them false brethren and there is a lot in Scripture about this. It's like these Ephraimites, these Ephraimites represent false brethren or as in one other portion of Scripture we're going to see here in Matthew 7:15, our Lord warned, if you want to look there with me, of wolves in sheep's clothing. He begins there in verse 13. People say, "Well, you preach a pretty narrow gospel." Well, Christ said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate," this isn't a wide open gate, it's a narrow gate, "for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." When you have a man's doctrine that he says, "Well, I try to preach it as broad as possible. I want to hang this hope out there for just as many as I can." If you widen the gate, you're making the way broad, here it says it's not just another way but that way leads to destruction, "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." We know this that any that do find it, it was that the Lord directed them, opened their eyes and caused them to see and that's when the Lord says, "Beware of false prophets." That's not talking about people that prophesy, end time things and that, it could be them but here the word "prophets" is used of forth-telling, any man who comes in the name of God or Christ prophesying, proclaiming, "Beware of such which come to you," notice, "in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves.

This is an example we have here in Judges with the Ephraimites. Outwardly they appeared to be brethren, they certainly bore the same name as the others. They could say, "We're Israelites just like you are." And perhaps late claim to the same background or groups as the rest of them, "We be of Israel." And yet they stood opposed to the Lord's man. This Jephthah was raised up by the Lord and he was the one that the Lord had put his blessing upon that he should go forth and deliver Israel. And you can see in verse 3, his blessing was that "the LORD delivered them into my hand: wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight against me?" That's a rhetorical question and the answer is that it must be and so it is with any. When you lay the truth of the gospel before them that gives Christ all the glory in salvation whether it has to do with our election in him, whether it has to do with our redemption. Can you think of any term with regard to salvation that doesn't come from Christ and flow to him in the glory? Whether it's pardoned sins, forgiveness? It's in him. Justification? By him and through him, through his blood. There is no part of this that has its origin in man or causes man in any way but this is where the fight is because unless the Spirit of God has taught a sinner and revealed Christ in that sinner, he's going to always find some reason to give himself the glory and that's tell tale. It doesn't take long to listen to somebody to see that he's not saying shibboleth, he's saying sibboleth.

It's like a friend of mine said one time, "There are a bunch of people out there that talk grace with an accent." It's just like you can figure out where people are from based on their accent, sometimes what their culture is. You don't even have to see them, just listen to them. They give themselves away by that accent. Get into a group of people sometimes and just listen. You don't even have to say anything, listen how they talk about the Bible, how they talk about God, how they talk about Christ and if you've got ears to hear, it doesn't take long to figure out, "These guys are saying sibboleth, they're not saying shibboleth." There's a difference and it's the Lord that gives that discernment.

So Scriptures warn of us those that are wolves in sheep's clothing. Pretense is what that is. But there's also intent. They will try to infiltrate. They will try to figure out a way to get you to change, get you to compromise and in that way, you see it maybe as something that's just innocent but it isn't. There's a willful trying to get you to join them just like Ephraim here rallied the people against Jephthah and went up against him and it was done like that. Also, Scripture speaks of false brethren who have entered in and here there are all kinds of them. Look in 1 John 4 for example. I started listing all of the different Scripture references that came to mind as I looked over some of these things and I had to finally stop because there are so many of them. But here are a few that I trust the Lord will use to give us discernment. Here in 1 John 4:1, very simply, "Beloved, believe not every spirit." When you talk about spirit it's not just listening to what man says but the spirit with which he declares it. "But try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Many. So when you stop and think about how many are standing and somehow professing to represent God, they have the Bible and for that reason, there are a lot of people deceived. They think, "Well, he preaches from the Bible."

We're going through Romans right now. I remember showing up one time in a congregation where the speaker, pastor of that congregation was on Romans 9 and I thought, "Well, this ought to be interesting because how can you get around Romans 9 if you're preaching it?" Well, he found a way around it in 45 minutes. He made it plain that God does not choose individuals and this all has to do with Israel as a nation over other nations and he went on down that road. He denied distinctive electing grace preaching from Romans 9. You say, "Well, how could you do that?" Willfully. That's how you do it, willfully. "They will not have this one to reign over them," and so we're to beware. But here it's describing the test. Is it wrong to try the spirits? When it's talking about the testing of the preacher? Test me. Don't just take it because Ken says so but compare this with the word. The Bereans did that with Paul. They weighed these things and went back and looked in the Scriptures to see if these things were so. I pray that that's how we approach our times of worship. You have the work, I encourage you to open and read are these things there or aren't they? There are some preachers that want their hearers to check their brains at the door. "I'm a pastor," is kind of how they reason. "You don't raise your hand against the Lord's anointed." That's the way they reason. There is a trouble even there when preachers begin to say, "Well, do you know how long I've been preaching? How long have you been preaching?" They get that sort of response when people are just taking this word and questioning them based upon what they've just said. We are to beware. This Bible is important.

In Titus 3, let me get back to our text here. This difference between shibboleth and sibboleth, there are some practical lessons there I want us to see. But here in Titus 3 you can see in verse 9, Paul says to Timothy, "But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain." People will try to get you to take up all kinds of subjects, "What do you think about this? What about this? How would you answer this?" and they are contentious and they've not been taught of the Spirit. Their heart has not been humbled by the Spirit of grace to see themselves as just abject sinners, wretches before a holy God and looking to Christ alone. You can see here the "foolish questions and genealogies." They're historians. They can take this word here and the Pharisees were the greatest at it. They could get people looking every which way with regard to the law and the Old Testament but to Christ and all that to make a fair show of themselves that they were somebody, knew something. It's like a man who takes all of these theological degrees and puts them after his name and he's proud.

But Paul says to Titus here, "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject." That word "heretic" actually means "to divide." If you find somebody who's sole purpose is just to take this word and divide and to preach down at and to stir people up and not point them to Christ, Paul is very clear, "Reject him after the first and second admonition." Approach him and speak to him but if his intent and this is again what we see here, this willingness to fight and debate just like these Ephraimites and especially when it has to do with the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ and who he is and what he has accomplished, don't have anything to do with them. I don't care how many degrees he has after his name. I don't care how much he says he knows the original languages. That's not what makes a person a representative of

the Lord Jesus Christ. It says in verse 11 here of Titus 3, "Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." The Lord is saying, "He's just letting you know what he is. He's a rebel."

And so we're to beware. There are many other Scriptures that we could look at but look in Acts 20. This was Paul's concern as he met with those Ephesian elders there on his way to Jerusalem and he spoke with them, verse 21, of what his message was, "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks," notice, "repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." That was his message. There are people that can come and preach repentance, at least the subject matter, and never preach Christ. Well, that grates on the old writers, the Puritans, that men uphold and put up on a pedestal and they could write volumes. I've read through some of these volumes on repentance and it is never about the person of Christ. Here in Scripture it is. Repentance is faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. There is not a preacher who has preached faith or repentance aright who does not direct your mind and your attention immediately to Christ alone. Why? Because there's nothing in here. But you've got preachers that will get you looking in here and expecting what I call fruit inspectors, "How's your repentance? What is it looking like?" and they'll preach long messages about the difference between evangelical repentance and just historical repentance. That's like having a person dying of hunger sitting in front of you and what you're doing over here is just describing what bread is like, what is the nature of bread. You're not getting the bread life. You're not given that which would give them life and sustenance. You're spending all of your time with something that is of no value.

So Paul describes there what his message has been but look down in verses 28 and 29, he said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers," notice, "to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." This is who we are to feed, is the church of God and not try to contend with the naysayers. I can remember a preacher friend of mine years ago when the congregation up in Grand Rapids, Michigan was taking offense to me preaching Christ and they were calling me up and wanting to take me out to lunch and it wasn't to fellowship, it was to get me to stop preaching Christ. At that time, I was alone but I remember this one particular preacher, one day I called him up and I was just talking about the situation and what I was facing and I remember him saying this to me, he said, "Well, do you feel like maybe there are perhaps a sheep or two in that congregation?" And I say, "Well, there are a few that seem like they do rejoice in hearing this message preached because they've called me and they tell me not to give up, this is what we need to hear." I remember distinctly what he told me, he said, "Preach to them. Just don't worry about the rest. Preach to them." He said, "If they're sheep, they're the ones that are going to want to hear this message and if the others aren't sheep, no matter how you deal with them, a goat is always a goat and a sheep is always going to be a sheep. Maybe you don't find out about it immediately but as you preach Christ to them, he'll draw them."

You know, that has been something that has stuck in my heart all these years and that's what Paul was saying here, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his

own blood. That's what it's all about. The warning, though, you can see in verse 29, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you," just like back here in Judges 12. These Ephraimites work among the Gileadites. They were among these that for whom Jephthah has been made their head. A lot of times we talk about what's false out there but we have to be mindful that even in a congregation where the gospel is faithfully preached, there are still going to be tares. There are still going to be grievous wolves that would not spare the flock were Christ not the one defending them. You see, this is like David who killed the lion and the bear protecting the sheep. That's the Lord's work to do. We don't have to worry about his sheep, the Lord will care for them.

But nonetheless, we need to beware because it says here in verse 30, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Again, we come back to Judas. He deceived the other disciples. He didn't see the Lord. The Lord said, "I've chosen 12 of you and one of you is a son of perdition." The Lord knows those that are his. He knows those that aren't. But reading this, many times that opposition comes from some that can sit there a long while and seemingly embrace the message of Christ that gives him all the glory but at some point, if they're not the Lord's, it will be revealed.

It will raise its head just like these Ephraimites did coming back here to Judges 12. You say, "How severe was this opposition to him?" Well, it says here to the point that they said, "We will burn thine house upon thee with fire." Today they'd call that a terrorist threat. You get upset enough at somebody to tell him, "I'm coming over to burn down your house with you in it," somebody's calling the police. This is not a friend talking here. You preach Christ clear enough and plain enough, talk to family members and others, just stick with this of who gets the glory and sooner or later, these people that can seem so calm and people look at them and they call them good people, the anger comes out and they begin to rage to the point where they would hope to see your name in the obituary column. That's how strongly they feel against you. And if they're not the Lord's and they feel that way about you, I've often wondered, I wonder what you tell them. If you make light of where they worship and what it is they believe and don't ever make an issue of it, they'll never hate you. In fact, they'll probably love you because they think, "Well, we all get along." But if the Lord ever teaches you who he is in his glory, you can't be quiet if the Lord's talking. It's like one person said one time, "If the Lord has taught you the gospel, it will leak out on you." It's going to leak out. People are going to know it.

Let's come down to verse 6 here because there is a difference between shibboleth and sibboleth. It says there, "he could not frame to pronounce it right." This shows you something about grace as well. Some people listen carefully and they try to figure out exactly what it is you want them to say and then they begin to try to repeat it. But sooner or later, it's going to become clear that that's just trying to verbalize. That's the problem with Catechisms and you can say, "Here's the question and here's the answer. If anybody wants to be a member of this congregation, we're going to go through a Catechism and this is what we believe so here's the question and here's the answer. Here's the question,

here's the answer. What's the answer?" It's like flashcards. Frontline said one time, "You can teach a parrot to say 'Salvation is of the Lord' but that doesn't mean that parrot has any understanding."

And so here we have an example of these who truly were with Jephthah and from his region that knew how to say shibboleth but when they put it to this one who was asking passage across the river, he couldn't say it. Put on the spot, he couldn't say it. I've had some that have come and ask me to baptize them and as I've sat with them, I'm not trying to be difficult, if the Lord has not worked his grace, it's not something you have to ask permission. The thing to do is to enter into the water of baptism but when you ask somebody, "Well, tell me a little bit about the work of the Lord in your heart," and then you get quiet and just sit back and listen and it all begins with "I," "Well, I this, I realize that and I decided I'm going to turn over a new leaf." You listen to 3 or 4 sentences that all begin with "I" and there's something wrong here. Can't you pronounce shibboleth? You're saying sibboleth, it's shibboleth. There's a difference. It didn't take that blind man long when they questioned him and this wasn't by some friendly interrogator, these were the Pharisees that questioned this man, "Tell us whether this man is a sinner or not." They had issues with him because he was healed on their Sabbath day and for them that was a blaspheme by their standards. They were taking a position against Christ and they wanted this man that the Lord had healed in John 9, to renounce him. He said, "All I can tell you is that I know I was blind and now I see." He was giving Christ all the glory of where he was and what he was. That's what it is. It doesn't take long listening to figure out somebody is not pronouncing this thing right.

Now, as I prepared this the Lord gave me some thoughts. By the way "shibboleth," they weren't trying to trick this guy. The word "shibboleth" in the original actually means "to ask permission" to go over the river. All they were asking this man to do was to ask permission that he could cross this river. Isn't that what he was doing there? He came to this place and he was seeking passage over. Out of the heart the mouth speaks. But when he said "sibboleth," mispronouncing it, that's actually a word too. It means "an ear of corn, a grain of wheat." They asked him to ask permission to come across the river and one little change of a word was something completely different. As I thought about that, I thought how men will take just one little thing and change it. This lies to the Scriptures and differences in versions of Scripture. People say, "Well, how can you stick with the King James? Don't we have other more modern translations today?" I'll tell you why I stick with this: because these translators used the copies from the original text that was called the Received Text, the Textus Receptus, all the way up to the 1850s. There was never a question. The original documents and the copies that we had that are based on that. 1850S, two men came along by the name of Westcott and Hort who determined that the Bible is not the word of God and they were going to go out there and dig around and find some other copies of what they called more ancient than what we have in order to translate it to give these to people. I will tell you of all the modern versions that you can walk into any so-called Bible bookstore and you look along those shelves, those modern versions are based upon, these newer translations are based upon those corrupt manuscripts.

Does it matter? Look at an example here in 1 Timothy 3:16. I'll give you an example of the difference between shibboleth and sibboleth right here in 1 Timothy 3:16 and the Lord used this years ago. I'm thankful that he put my path across somebody that had a strong persuasion in this matter because it has affected me for the rest of my life, understanding this difference. Here it is in our authorized version, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." How strong is that? Does that line up with what we know about Christ? It was God manifest in the flesh. Let me read you the translation from the New International Version which a lot of people today that you talk to, that's what they have in their hands. Here's what the New International Version translators put it, "Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: he appeared in a body." Our says "God appeared in the body." This says "he appeared." What does that do? It leaves it open to however we want to look at it.

There is a difference between shibboleth and sibboleth. You say, "Well, you're really getting nit-picky." Yes, because it has to do with the glory of Christ. So there's an area. But how about secondly, matters pertaining to the law? Was there any aspect of the law that God would lower that standard in order for God to save sinners? You've got people today saying, "Well, we can't keep the law but I'll tell you what trumps it: God loves us." That's the message. God loves everybody. I know that none of us is perfect but, you know, that's the difference between shibboleth and sibboleth.

Look what the Lord said in Matthew 5 and verse 17 and 18. You see, they accused our Lord of going around the law because he would not cater to their interpretations of the law. There is a difference: there's the law and then there's men's interpretation of it. As far as the law is concerned, what do we read here? Matthew 5:17, Christ said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." And then he goes on and says, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." How is it that God saves sinners? It's in accord with the just satisfaction of his law and either Christ satisfied it or he didn't. If he didn't, there's no salvation. If he did, then that means it satisfied on behalf of everyone that he represents. That's how minute and Christ in Matthew 5 here brings out that it's not just the letter of the law, it's the jot and the tittle. That has to do with those little marks in the original language that can make the difference between a "c" and a "k," again, between shibboleth or sibboleth. We look at it and say, "Ah, it's the same thing." No, one means the request to come across the river and the other means a grain of wheat.

I can remember a story of a missionary in Africa who was trying to learn the local language and in the language there when he was preaching from a portion of Scripture right here in Matthew 5 "you are the salt of the earth." In that dialect that I grew up with, salt is "ingo" but he forgot to pronounce it that way and so while he was preaching, he was actually saying "ino." Instead of "ingo, ino," he just took a little "g" out of there. Well, "ino" means urine and so here he is in this congregation telling everybody that you're the urine of the earth. Well, that may be so from the standpoint of who we are as

sinner but that wasn't the point of the passage and everybody saw it except for him. That's one of those little jots and tittles that can make a difference.

People say, "Ah, it doesn't matter. Let's don't..." It does matter because when it comes to this matter of salvation and God being just, it matters even with regard to the disobedience to the law, if there hasn't been that ransom paid by the Lord Jesus Christ. Over in James 2:10, it says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. That could be one jot or tittle, he's guilty of all. Your obedience to the law, you've not heard what the law says. It has no room for imperfection in any sense whether the letter or the spirit of the law.

So these are the shibboleths and the sibboleths of Scripture but particularly in matters pertaining to the personal work of the Lord Jesus Christ. How much difference does a word make? Here again, you're going to see a difference. Look in Galatians 2:16, it says, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ," that little word "of" is the shibboleth. You can read some of these other translations and interpretations of men and they'll put "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ." Does that make a difference? Have you changed the meaning? One says "by the faith of Jesus Christ," in other words, the faithfulness of Jesus Christ versus "by faith in Jesus Christ," which does what? Puts it in man's hands.

People say, "Aw, now you're really..." Well, just like this man here. He didn't pronounce shibboleth and it cost him his life. They took him right there and slew him. I want to tell you that in this matter of salvation, it does matter what the Scriptures say and what man professes and says concerning this that, "This is God's record that he has given of his Son." That's why in all these matters pertaining to who Christ is and what he accomplished and where he is now and for whom he did it, they all matter because in the end it's who gets the glory, is it Christ or is any part of it in regard to man.

One other portion and I'll be done over in Isaiah 8, verse 20. How vital is it? Well, here in Isaiah 8:20, the Lord himself says here, "To the law and to the testimony," that's the Scriptures. If we want to understand things pertaining to God and Christ in these matters, it's to the law and the testimony. That's God's testimony. That's his law. "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Quit making excuses for people. If they're not speaking according to this word and when you bring it up to them they get upset and they push back and as you continue to question them they become angry with you, it's because there's no light in them. Don't give them the benefit of the doubt. I know people say, "Well, we ought not to judge." I'll tell you what: we're not judging, this word is what judges. But that's the difference. These are life and death matters and may the Lord grant us his Spirit to know the difference.