

"Jesus Knows the Heart"**John 2:23-25**

Introduction: Last week in our study of John we were walking with Jesus as He went to Jerusalem for Passover. While there He found the religious leaders in the Court of the Gentiles selling, trading, and exchanging money. He made a scourge of small cords and He drove them out. They had set up a market in which they were taking advantage of the worshipers who had come to celebrate Passover. After Jesus drove them out they asked Him for a sign to prove that He had the authority to do what He had done.

Notice John 2:18

They requested a sign, but they never once addressed the issue at hand. They knew what they were doing was wrong, but their greed drove them beyond their conviction. It was this event as well as another time when Jesus did the same thing toward the end of His public ministry that brought the hatred out of the religious leaders toward Him.

Notice John 2:19-21

Jesus spoke in parabolic form here and He pointed to the greatest sign of all; His death, burial, and resurrection. The resurrection would be the proof that He had the authority because it proved He was who He claimed to be, and that was God. These men were blinded to what He was speaking of. Jesus would not give them a sign at that time because they would not respond to the Truth which they had been given to this point. The resurrection would come later as the sign to prove Jesus had the authority. But it made no difference after the resurrection because they did their best to explain it away. Notice what happened after the resurrection.

Matthew 28:11-15

¹¹ Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

¹² And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

¹³ Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.

¹⁴ And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

¹⁵ So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

Notice John 2:22

When Jesus was resurrected the Holy Spirit brought into the minds of His disciples the Words Jesus spoke here.

John 14:26-27

²⁶ But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

²⁷ Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Now we come to where we are in our study tonight.

➤ **The Response to Jesus' Miracles**

As we get ready to close out this chapter we come to 3 verses that have caused a great deal of discussion.

Notice John 2:23-25

Before we get to the main thought in these verses let us first of all notice that Jesus did many miracles while He was at Jerusalem that we know nothing about. This is in harmony with what John recorded in the last verse of this letter.

John 21:25

²⁵ And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

Now the question that rises here in these verses is, "Were these people saved?" Verse 23 tells us that MANY believed in His name because of the miracles. But as we read on, we see that He did not commit Himself to them because He knew all men, which means He knew their hearts.

Now some would say that they only believed in His name, but they did not trust in Him as Savior so that means they fell short of saving faith. But there are verses which we need to consider.

John 1:12

¹² *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

John 20:31

³¹ *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

1 John 3:23

²³ *And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.*

Because of these verses there are some who teach that these people were true believers, but Jesus did not commit Himself to them for a reason. What would the reason be? They will tell you that these believers were not walking in obedience and for that reason Jesus did not commit to them.

Then there are many who say that these people were not true believers. Notice the words of William MacDonald.

"As a result of the signs which Jesus performed in Jerusalem at the Passover, many believed in His name. This does not necessarily mean that they actually committed their lives to Him in simple trust; rather, they professed to accept Him. There was no reality to their action; it was merely an outward display of following Jesus. It was similar to the condition which we have in the world where many people claim to be Christians who have never truly been born again through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice the words of Warren Wiersbe.

"It was one thing to respond to a miracle but quite something else to commit oneself to Jesus Christ and continue in His Word. John was not discrediting the importance of our Lord's signs, because he wrote his book to record these signs and to encourage his readers to trust Jesus Christ and receive eternal life." However, throughout the book, John makes it clear that it takes more than believing in miracles for a person to be saved. Seeing the

signs and believing in them would be a great beginning; in fact, even the disciples started that way and had to grow in their faith."

The faith that these people had was not true saving faith. They believed in the person of Jesus, but it went no further. There are many today that have the same spurious faith. Let us notice some verses that support this.

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹ *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

²² *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?*

²³ *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

I underlined and bolded the word "MANY" because it is the same word in John 2:23. The people whom Jesus is speaking of in Matthew 7 also believed in Jesus and we know that because they claimed to do many things in His name. But they were NEVER saved. The statement which Jesus makes at the end of Matthew 7:23 shines light on the fact that their faith was spurious. He referred to them as people who worked iniquity. This means they were people who lived like there was no Law or no Bible. The point is that the faith they claimed to have never resulted in a changed life. Let us notice another passage.

James 2:14-20, 26

¹⁴ *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?*

¹⁵ *If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,*

¹⁶ *And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?*

¹⁷ *Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*

¹⁸ *Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*

¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

²⁰ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

I show you these verses to help us to understand that there is such a thing as faith that does not save. It is belief that Jesus is the Messiah, but it is not a faith that trusts in Him for the forgiveness of sin. There is a difference in knowing about Jesus and KNOWING Jesus personally. Eternal life is a relationship with the Lord.

There are many people today who believe they are saved but their faith is not saving faith. Paul was concerned about this when he wrote to the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 13:5

⁵ Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Let me get back to those who teach that these people were saved but they say Jesus would not commit to them because of their lack of obedience. First of all, does that sound like the Great Shepherd? If their faith was saving faith, then they would belong to Him, and I do not believe He would not commit to any of His sheep regardless of where they were in their walk.

Matthew 18:11-14

¹¹ For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

¹² How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

¹³ And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

¹⁴ Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

2 Timothy 2:13

¹³ *If we believe not, **yet he abideth faithful**: he cannot deny himself.*

It does not fit the Scriptures to say they were saved but Jesus would not commit to them because they were not in obedience. Jesus Christ is committed to every person who is born again even when we go astray. In His commitment we endure chastisement.

Hebrews 12:6-8

⁶ *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

⁷ *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*

⁸ *But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

Notice John 2:24-25

The word "COMMIT" in verse 24 is the same word that is translated "BELIEVED" in the previous verse. Some say that they believed in Jesus, but He did not believe in them.

Application:

There is something here that is very important to notice. Just because someone names the name of Jesus does not mean that they are a True believer. There are more and more people today who are talking about Jesus, but when you look at where they are coming from you find out the Jesus, they are talking about is not the Jesus of the Bible. We see this in professional athletes and stars in Hollywood. They are given a platform because they mention Jesus, but their lifestyle is proof they have never been born again. Notice the statement below and let us heed the warning.

"Sometimes the name of Jesus is used in a reverent way. Sometimes it is used as a cuss word. But sometimes His name is used as a password to disarm people and disguise the evil which they wish to infiltrate."

Conclusion:

We cannot see into the heart of people like Jesus can, but we can watch their lives.

1 John 4:1

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Matthew 24:4-5, 11

⁴ *And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.*

⁵ *For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.*

¹¹ *And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.*