

Wednesday's in the Word
Digging Deeper
June 10th, 2020
Joshua 1:1-9
Do You Think You're
What They Say You Are?

VOICE OF JUDAS

Every time I look at you I don't understand
Why you let the things you did get so out of hand.
You'd have managed better if you'd had it planned.
Why'd you choose such a backward time in such a strange land?
If you'd come today you could have reached a whole nation.
Israel in 4 BC had no mass communication.
Don't you get me wrong.
I only want to know.

CHOIR

Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ,
Who are you? What have you sacrificed?
Jesus Christ Superstar,
Do you think you're what they say you are?

In a blasphemous exercise in entertainment from a generation ago, a doubting, mocking society was weaned into its earliest years of arrogantly challenging the God of the Universe. Within sight of the fantastic Jesus Movement of the late sixties and early seventies which gave spiritual birth to myself and millions of others, most of the rest of society took union with the son of perdition himself (a), in firing flaming arrows of accusation (b), contempt and disgust at whom they blindly reasoned was a failed profit at best, even a misguided fool at worst. At their lowest point they so degraded our Lord Jesus Christ as to attempt to tempt Him to question His own sanity and integrity. Their hope was to cause Him to doubt Himself and to utterly fail in His mission allowing them to laugh him to scorn. Their loaded question was targeted at lowering Jesus to wondering if He met the standards of His "brainwashed" followers. Since that time it has been asked, "Is God dead?" (c) Is Jesus a mere Guru of a philosophical form of peace on Earth? These doubts and derisions 'progressed' through the removal of God's Word, the Bible, the Ten Commandments, prayer and any other pillars of our faith from the public squares. Destroying churches is even the goal now of the more violent segments of the populace. While the unbelieving world of years ago tolerated the faith of Christians and even enjoyed the collateral blessings of a Christian zeitgeist they have now progressed to an anger, hatred and intolerance of any mention of Jesus' Name or His precepts with their implied restrictions (d). Any look at the condition of our nation will reveal the degradation of the Christian mores. As our nation falls, fails and stumbles into darkness, many Christians struggle with their faith and question the very truths that were once held high (e). Is this indeed such a dark time? Can we

compare it to the struggle that lay ahead for Joshua and the new nation of Israel? Having lost their great leader Moses (f) and enduring a horrific journey from slavery they were now faced with the challenges of entering a new land which would bring them into a conflict of insurmountable odds (g). God's message to their new leader in Joshua 1:1- 9 focused on two great tenets of the christian pursuit. As we face a new and uncomfortably changing America we too must sit up and open our hearts, minds and souls to God's encouraging guidance. Three times the Lord said to Joshua to be strong and of good courage. Going into battle with God will take this level of character in us if we are to see success. The heart of His message to Joshua and therefore to us is found in Verses 7 & 8. Along with having courage based in Christ himself we are to be fully committed to the following posits.

Joshua 1:7-8 KJVS

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. [8] This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

How must we proceed to succeed in these challenging and confrontational days? In breaking down this passage we know that thanks to Jesus and His sacrifice we are free from the penalty and restrictions of the law (h) and yet we are warned to observe and to do according to all the law. Sometimes as christians we feel that since Jesus paid It all we can ride easy and skip over some of the serious limitations (i) that God has for His people. Keeping God's law will not get us to heaven because it is impossible for us to do it perfectly. But keeping His law will guide our lives and that of our families on a sure trac of integrity and blessing (j). Note the strength of the words in that we must not turn from it to our right or our left. How often do we stray against our conscience and the revealed will of the Holy Spirit knowing that we will not be punished? We often push the boundaries, stepping over the line without fear. Do you remember in gym class when you had to walk on a narrow board and keep your balance? Similarly, God allows us to fail but he expects us to do our best because we represent His Name in this world (k). God tells us this endeavor will cause us to prosper. That doesn't mean you will earn lots of money and live in a big house. That means you will prosper for the kingdom of God and see Souls won to Christ (l). God tells us not to allow the law to depart from our mouth meaning everything we say should be correct in truth and righteousness (m). He deepens that by saying we shall meditate on it day and night. The knowledge of God's goodness and perfection in the communion we have with Him through the conversation of prayer should be a constant default position for us (n). Speaking again of prospering for His kingdom (and the caution here is not being concerned with prospering for ourselves), He tells us to observe to do according to all that is written therein. It's a big Bible and there are a lot of things in there. Laws and precepts and principles. Get to know the difference. In last week's study in Matthew 5:38-42 Jesus quoted the law and did not seek to change it concerning how the government should control criminality but He continued on to give

us precepts and principles to live by. Grace and mercy are to be the prominent part of our character and we are still called to live in a way that honors every word of the Bible.

Going back to the doubt that Satan tried to place on Christ and which he of course failed at, let us really ask the very question that sinful man has continually asked Jesus. In asking him “do you think you're what they say you are?”, consider a conversation He had with His disciples. Refer to Matthew 16:13-17. Jesus knew Who He was and so did His disciples. He was the Son of Man and the Christ, the Son of the Living God. God in human flesh. Now, perhaps we can turn that question on ourselves. Let the world ask you this question. Do you think you are what they say you are? Are you known for being a Christian? Are you known for living a right life? Are you known for being a “religious” man or woman? A person of prayer? Does your purpose in life cause you to desire fulfilling a role in changing the world for Christ and is it evident to others? As We are faced with the demise of christian liberty and values, can we, like Queen Esther, stand against the opposition? (o). Consider your role in today's world. Were you created for a time such as this? Do people have a true or false image of who you are? Is their true image of you one of hypocrisy? Is it accurate? Do you try to live up to the shallow and misunderstood expectations of mankind? Or do you truly live up to the standard of our Heavenly Father Who sent His Son to die for your sins? Are you what your friends and family think you are? Are you what God expects you to be? Right living is not a matter of pride or self-worth. Right living is glorifying God in the hope of opening doors before others so that they may see in you, the joy, integrity and fullness of Life In Christ (p). The world around us may hate us for a feigned religiosity or they may honor us for truly living lives that support our claims of belief. Give it some thought. Do you think you are what they say you are? If so, cross the Jordan of life, stand on the other side and defend the Righteousness of your Savior!

Scripture References

- a. John 17:12
- b. Ephesians 6:16
- c. Time Magazine April 8, 1966
- d. Acts 4:12
- e. Luke 24: 38
- f. Deuteronomy 34:5-12
- g. Numbers 13:26-33
- h. Romans 8:1-4
- i. Law = Gr. Nomos = a parcel of land set aside for animals to graze. Think of the peace and safety of resting within the Good Shepherds' fences.
- j. Romans 7:12, Psalm 19:7-9
- k. Ephesians 2:10, 2 Corinthians 5:20
- l. Acts 1:8, Matthew 16:19
- m. Ephesians 4:15, 25
- n. Psalm 1:2, 63:6
- o. Esther 3:8-4:17
- p. Matthew 5:9-16