

The Gospel of John

12:35-50

Welcome back to this week's study in the book of John.
As with this study and all bible studies, remember to pray before you start.

Last week the Jews asked, "***Who is this Son of Man?***"
Referring to what Jesus said back in verse 23

✎ ***But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.***

Jesus answers them, but not with an answer that they expected, and that is where we will start out in this week's study.

✎ ***John 12:35-36 Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.***

We have all seen those movies where someone is walking at night with a flashlight, then all of a sudden the light goes out and the person has no idea where they are going. Or think about a night drive in an area that you have never driven before. When this happens, we all drive slower and more cautiously because we can't see that well and are unfamiliar with the road. When it's daytime we can see a lot better and will drive like we are familiar with the road even if we aren't, because we can see.

Jesus is telling them that they have been walking an unknown road with His light guiding them, but still they are going the wrong way on a one-way street.

We all know this verse from Psalms.

✠ ***Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.***

The Jews knew this also, but still even though they had God's word to guide and direct them, they still didn't follow the path that God was leading before them.

✎ ***he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.***

Just because the streets are lit up at night or even during the day, if you do not follow a road map or the proper directions you are given, then you have no idea where you are going, or how to get there.

✠ ***"While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."***

Jesus was telling them that it was daytime and that the road is before them and that He is giving them directions to where they wanted to go, and that was heaven. But unless they believed in Him and followed His directions they would never get there. But if they did believe then they could direct others just as Jesus was.

We all once used to walk in darkness, groping around trying to find our way in this world. We searched every way but it was like the parable that Jesus spoke.

† ***Luke 6:39 And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?"***

When we looked to the world for direction, it was like the blind leading the blind and as Jesus says, ***will they not both fall into the ditch?*** We were being led into the ditch or pit of hell by following the world's ways. But thanks be to God, we have the light of Jesus Christ and the path that He had laid before us leading to the cross. We took that path and have found eternal life in that path which leads to Jesus Christ.

The Jews didn't understand what Jesus was saying and it says that, ***these things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.***

Some translations (like the NIV) say that Jesus hid Himself from them. So was Jesus hiding Himself, physically from them or did He just leave like in past times? Well, if you will remember the Jews sought to stone Jesus before and He left and then came back which we read about in chapter 11. So it was possible that Jesus just left them with this last thought, because there is no mention that they wanted to kill Jesus at this time.

✠ ***John 12:37-41 But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:***

"Lord, who has believed our report?

And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"

Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

"He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts,

Lest they should see with their eyes,

Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,

So that I should heal them."

These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

In verse 38 John is referring to:

† **Isaiah 53:1** *Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*

And in verse 40 John is referring to:

† **Isaiah 6:10** *"Make the heart of this people dull,
And their ears heavy,
And shut their eyes;
Lest they see with their eyes,
And hear with their ears,
And understand with their heart,
And return and be healed."*

And finally in verse 41 John is referring to:

† **Isaiah 6:1** *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne,
high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.*

Now you may read these verses and ask why would God do such a thing if God really wants all to be saved?

It's not that the Lord caused their spiritual blindness, but because of the hardness of the hearts of the people, they refused to be healed so that they could see.

Remember Jesus said,

† **Matt 7:6** *Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.*

If the Lord had healed their spiritual blindness they would still refuse to believe in Jesus because their hearts would not get right with the Lord.

Sad to say but there are still so many who will refuse to believe the word of God. We think that if the Lord would just do a miracle in their lives that they would believe.

But did you catch what John wrote in verse 37?

✠ *But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him.*

We seek after signs and wonders, we try sharing Christian music and plays, books and movies, but the truth is that they need the word of God, for only by the word of God can anyone be saved.

† **Luke 8:11-12** *Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*

The Jews had God's word and they tried so hard to practice it, but they added so much to God's word that God's word no longer had an effect on them.

† **Mark 7:13** *"making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do."*

This is why they refused to believe.
But not all were blinded, but not all could see clearly.

✠ **John 12:42-43** *Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*

This last week was the second anniversary of 9/11. Remember the Sunday after 9/11 and how the churches were packed with people who were scared and looking for answers? Remember how many came forward for the altar calls to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior? Now look at the churches, pretty much back to normal as the emotion of the moment has worn off. But through what happened two years ago I believe that many came to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior, but I think what has happened to them is the same thing John is talking about here in verse 43 *for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God*. The people were scared and wanted some type of comfort in those troubled times, and they found that comfort in Jesus Christ. But as things started getting back to normal, they saw their old ways of life and desired that false comfort that the world had to offer once again instead of the true comfort they found in Jesus.

But they are not the only ones, we do the same thing sometimes when we have an opportunity to share Jesus, but we are afraid what others would say or think if we started to share Jesus with them. Would our co-workers start making fun of us, would our families start rejecting us, would our friends leave us? Questions that always seem to creep into our minds as we are confronted with the opportunity to share Jesus with someone.

When we give in to these thoughts, we are putting self first and are not thinking of others, nor loving them as we should. You see, when we get scared off because we don't want to be rejected, we are saying that the person we wanted to share Jesus with isn't really worth it, and our own pride can lead them to hell as we put ourselves first and don't share Jesus with them.

Maybe as you read this you thought of certain situations or one that was even very resent that you could have shared Jesus with someone but didn't because of fear or pride. Let me tell you that it's not too late, ask the Lord to open that door again and to help you to walk through it. Admit your failures to the Lord and ask for His forgiveness. He will forgive you and may very possibly open that door again for you to share Jesus.

Jesus knew all of this and responded with.

✠ **John 12:44-50** *Then Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.*

I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."

Did you notice the first thing that Jesus said? *He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me.* Jesus was testifying of the Father (God) and wanted to show the people that if you believe that you won't care what others think, but that you would proclaim the truth even if you are rejected (and Jesus was rejected).
Next Jesus says.

✎ *And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.*

We should all be able to say this.
Paul was able to say this to the Corinthians.

✠ **1 Cor 11:1** *Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.*

We all think that this is an awesome thing to be able to say and mean it, but the truth is that we should all be able to say this. The problem is the life we are living. We know it's not pleasing to God, yet we do it anyway. We all need to look at our lives and ask ourselves if it is pleasing to God, and if not then why.

One good way to see yourself is through your children. Our children imitate what they see us doing. If they see us praying and reading God's word and helping those in need then they will imitate these things. But if they hear us cussing and watching things we shouldn't and saying bad things about others, they will do the same thing.

My daughter in law told us that their little two-year-old daughter is starting to almost cuss. She gets almost all the words out but the last (bad) word she doesn't say completely, because she can't yet. She said that they are trying to say something else when they are around her instead of this bad word. The real answer is not just to watch ourselves around our children, but watch ourselves all the time. If you try not to cuss around your children but do it other times, it will slip out once in a while and they catch on to that very quickly. But if it's something you don't practice at any time then there is no worrying about slipping up.

So what are you kids saying and doing?

Have they learned it from you? Are you sure they haven't?

Jesus once again proclaims Himself as the light of this world.

✎ *I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.*

Many had not believed in Jesus, some had but as we read were concerned with their status in the synagogue, instead of what God thought. Then there were those who did believe. The first were in total darkness, the second were in a gray hue looking for that true light but not really grasping onto it. The last were walking in the light of Jesus Christ, we know this as we read the rest of the New Testament, which testifies of those who did.

There are other books such as Fox's book of Martyrs that tell of those who believed and died for their faith in Jesus Christ.

We all say that we would die for Jesus Christ and I believe that we would, but the real question is, will you live for Jesus Christ?

✚ *And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.*

Jesus' words here are very important and ones we should all remember.

✚ *for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.*

At a men's group I attend each week we were talking about this same thing here, where we tend to judge and pick and choose who we want to witness to. We look at some and say that he or she would be a good Christian, but then look at others and think that there is no hope for him or her.

Even when we go to church on Sunday, don't we judge who we will sit next to or who we want, or don't want to sit next to us? Do we judge how someone sings in church or how he or she dresses? Don't we even judge who we will talk to after church service?

It could be the very one's we cast out are the ones that need ministering to. Has the Lord sent you there to minister to him or her and have you judged that person and told God, "Not his person, send me to someone else"?

What if Jesus said, "OK God, I will die for the sins of the people, but let me choose which ones I will die for" I wonder if you or I would be one that Jesus would choose? But thanks be to God this did not happen, and Jesus choose to die for the sins of all, including you and me.

If you truly want to be like Jesus then don't pick and choose, but allow the Lord to pick and choose who He will send your way, and when God does, don't brush that person off!

✚ **John 6:37** *All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.*

Just think, if my dad had thought that I was too far gone or too hopeless even for Jesus Christ then I wouldn't be teaching God's word right now and I could be dead in hell. But thanks be to God, my dad and the pastor saw beyond my sins and saw what Jesus did on the cross for me. Jesus did the same for that person He wants you to talk to or minister to.

✠ *He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him-- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.*

All we have to do is share the gospel. Don't wig out if that person does not accept Jesus right there and then, because remember that you have planted a seed or watered a seed that someone else has planted in that person's heart.

Our job is to share the gospel, the word of God, with others. God will do the rest, and if they refuse to listen, then God's word will condemn them, not our judgment.

✠ *"For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."*

We get so worried that we won't have the right words to speak. Remember Moses talking to God about this same thing?

✠ *Ex 4:10-12 Then Moses said to the LORD, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." So the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD? Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say."*

We look at our abilities and tell God that we are of no use to Him. We tend to forget that God created us, and if He wants to use us He will give us the ability to do whatever He wants us to do.

It may be teaching or writing or singing or playing an instrument or going on a missionary trip or give to the needy or whatever the Lord may have laid upon your own heart to do.

I've told you this before that I never graduated from high school, never attended any college, have no training on creation of web pages or the Internet. Yet the Lord has given me the ability to teach His word on the Internet. I could have made up all sorts of excuses for not doing it, but what it came down to was that the Lord has a purpose in my life to teach on the Internet right now, and He is fulfilling that purpose by His means not my own.

So what has the Lord asked you to do? What have been your excuses for not doing them?

✠ *So the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD? Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."*

Don't depend upon your own abilities, but rather the Lord's ability to work through you!

Well we made it through another chapter. Next week we will start chapter 13 as we reach Passover and what we call the last supper. Chapter 13 also is the final night before Jesus

is crucified, and John tells us a lot about what Jesus has to say to His disciples. Actually from chapters 13–17, are four chapters of Jesus' final words and prayer before the Garden and betrayal.

May the Lord richly bless you in His love, grace and mercy and may you live for Jesus because He died for you!