

9-16-17
TRUSTING IN THE WRONG THING FOR ETERNAL LIFE

Our text for this morning is:

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

As you read through the Bible, especially the New Testament, you find a lot of people who just would not come to the Lord. What is funny is that the ones who were the most obstinate were the ones who were supposed to know God. Jesus had the biggest problem with the religious leaders, more so than with anyone else. They had all kind of reasons that they did not like Jesus. Most of those reasons were built off of their opinions and presuppositions. They could not see the forest for the trees. They choked on gnats and swallowed full grown camels.

As I am reading through the New Testament I can't help but wonder what was the spiritual poison that spoiled these people from coming to Christ.

Could you imagine, people who literally saw the miracles Jesus performed, knew first hand He was resurrected, and yet for all of this they did not receive Him?

Now the scary thing was that they thought they were perfectly fine. They believed themselves to be right!

I believe the worse scenario that could ever happen to a person is that they end up like these Pharisees. We are going to look at some of the mistakes they made that led to their damnation.

I. THEY TRUSTED IN THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE SCRIPTURE.

II. THEY TRUSTED IN THE WRONG THINGS.

III. THEY TRUSTED IN THE COMING OF THE WRONG MESSIAH.

I. THEY TRUSTED IN THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE SCRIPTURE THE WRONG WAY.

1. THEY SOUGHT VAIN KNOWLEDGE AND WORDS.

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

They thought that knowing religious truths would bring them salvation.

There are many people who think repeating words, knowing facts, and studying catechisms make them spiritual. Just because a person knows Biblical facts does not make them spiritual.

When I was younger I went to a church where we were taught to memorize and repeat prayers. As if to repeat the prayers would make a person spiritual.

The Jews to this day are big on repeating prayers. We showed a documentary in the church Friday night entitled "The Battle for Jerusalem". The documentary was about the 6 day war. The Jews took back Jerusalem after 2000 years. It showed them praying at the wailing wall. At the wall they were repeating chants and prayers. So to this day these Jews seem to gravitate to formalities rather than having a personal relationship with their God.

2. *THEY THOUGHT KNOWLEDGE OF SCRIPTURE MADE THEM RIGHT WITH GOD.*

I sometimes think there are many people to this day in the church that think they are alright because they know things about the Bible.

When I was a kid we learned the Apostles Creed..

The Apostles Creed is Biblically Based.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

I memorized this, repeated it, had to learn it to be eligible for Holy Communion and Confirmation. But trusting in a creed, trusting in Biblical Words does not mean you have eternal life or that you are saved.

3. *THESE RELIGIOUS LEADERS WERE SO SURE OF THEMSELVES.*

A. *THEY THOUGHT THEY KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT THE MESSIAH.*

Jesus had been teaching and there was a great division among the people because many believed in Him. Others doubted. WE READ THIS:

John 7:45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

John 7:46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

John 7:47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

John 7:48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

John 7:49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

John 7:50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

John 7:51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

John 7:52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

John 7:53 And every man went unto his own house.

They thought they were so smart. They had half the story, not the whole story..

I have seen people who teach the Bible suddenly think they are the authority and want to pigeon hole everyone into wearing their interpretations of things that are sometimes not so clear. I used to see a lot of that in Bible college and seminary. A professor would write a paper on a subject and suddenly they expected everyone to bow down to their interpretation on that subject.

I had a professor who wrote a book about ordinations, and when my Pastor was voted in to lead an ordination council at the church that housed the seminary, that professor was fuming at the way my pastor conducted the ordination. You see my Pastor never read his book.

I had another professor who wrote a book on song leading and I was scheduled to song lead in chapel and he was scheduled to speak after I led the songs. The first thing he did was blast me on how I lead the song service. You see I did not read his book. Suddenly a man writes a book and becomes the authority.

You see there may be a bit of the Pharisee in all of us.

So these religious leaders claimed to have studied the subject of the Messiah and concluded Jesus could not be the Messiah because he came out of Galilee from the town of Nazareth. What they did not know is Jesus was born in Bethlehem and that his family went to Nazareth because it probably would have been the last place on earth that Herod would have searched for the Messiah.

I like what Paul said.

I Corinthians 8:2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

We are so proud about what we know. Do we really know anything?

Here Jesus is doing Miracles. Think about the miracles He did, but He can't be the Messiah because they wrote a book and that book says, according to their interpretation of the Bible, He had to be brought up and from Bethlehem.. They taught classes on the subject and they have become the authorities on the subject.

II. THEY TRUSTED IN THE WRONG THINGS.

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in **them** ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

IN THEM YE THINK YE HAVE STERNAL LIFE.

The Pharisees prided themselves in being Biblical and believed that they had eternal life by keeping the law.

1. THEY THOUGHT THEY KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT KEEPING THE LAW.

How could Jesus be of God, they said, when He violated the Sabbath, and did not keep the law. Imagine, He ate without washing his hands. He rebuked them time and time again.

Here is a classic case.

John 9:2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

John 9:3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

John 9:4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

John 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

John 9:6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

John 9:7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

John 9:8 The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

John 9:9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

John 9:10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

John 9:11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

John 9:12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

John 9:13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

John 9:14 And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

John 9:15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

John 9:16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

John 9:17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

John 9:18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

John 9:19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

John 9:20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

John 9:21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

John 9:22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

John 9:23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

John 9:24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

John 9:25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

John 9:26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

John 9:27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

John 9:28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

John 9:29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

John 9:30 The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

John 9:31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

John 9:32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

John 9:33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

John 9:34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

John 9:35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

John 9:36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

John 9:37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

John 9:38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

What an amazing story showing the hardness of the hearts of people who have religion but are not trully saved!

The spirit of the Pharisees lingers on even to this day in the church.

These Pharisees thought they were able to keep the law.

Luke 18:9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

Luke 18:10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

Luke 18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

Luke 18:12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

Luke 18:13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

Luke 18:14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Even when they put Jesus through their Kangaroo court system they prided themselves in keeping themselves in being innocent of killing him by using Rome to do their dirty work.

John 18:31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

They bribed Judas into betraying Jesus, paid him money to do so. When Judas took the money back to them and said he was wrong and hung himself. They said we can't put this money back in the treasury, it is polluted. So they bought a cemetery with the money. They paid the money but they prided themselves in the fact that they could not take the money back because it was now dirty money? As if they were not polluted.

They trusted in keeping certain elements of the law thinking that would justify them before God.

Finally and the most important of all.

III. THEY TRUSTED IN THE COMING OF THE WRONG MESSIAH. THEY WERE LOOKING TO FOR THE WRONG MESSIAH.

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

Our salvation is not wrapped up in knowing the Bible.

Our salvation is not wrapped up in keeping ceremonial laws.

Our salvation is not wrapped up in repeating prayers or creeds.

Our salvation is based on a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

All Scripture points to Jesus.

Moses predict that someday a prophet would come that was like him.

Deuteronomy 18:18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

Deuteronomy 18:19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

Jesus was pictured in the Rock that Moses struck that brought water.

Jesus was pictured as the serpent that Moses lifted up the wilderness.

In the Kings He is predicted, as being the Son of David whose kingdom would be eternal.

The psalms clearly prophesied of Him.

The prophets wrote of Him.

From Genesis 3:16 to Mal 4:2 all the Old Testament Scripture spoke of Christ.

But how is it that the Pharisees could not see that Jesus was the Christ?

Here is the reason why:

1. THE PHARISEES WERE OF THE WORLD AND WANTED A WORLDLY LEADER.

John 5:43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

I John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

I John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

These leaders wanted a worldly leader because they were of the world.

Christ's virtue, humility, subjection to His father and message of a heavenly Kingdom was despised by these people and leaders.

Christ spoke the truth without partiality of persons. Whether a Pharisee a gentile, a Samaritan, Jesus was not a respecter of persons. He did not bow before these religious leaders.

They were looking for the wrong messiah.

True salvation is wrapped up in the person of Jesus Christ and none other.

2. Salvation is coming to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

How do you get introduced to a person? You do so by another person who knows him.

You can know of a person, that does not mean you know the person personally.

I know of Donald Trump but I do not know him personally. If I called the white house and said, this is Frank Bissol could I speak to Donald Trump, what do think would happen?

3. We need to have a personal relationship with Christ to have eternal life.

When I first heard about needing to be saved, I rejected it. I had all kind of reasons for rejecting the gospel message. I could list my arguments but they were the typical humanistic arguments. My problem was, I was running away from the Lord.

It wasn't until I found myself in a church hearing people share their testimonies about how the Lord changed their lives that I thought to myself, how could this person Jesus Christ who died almost 2000 years ago be changing peoples lives today? Does a dead person make any changes in people's lives? That's when in my heart I prayed a little prayer and said Lord if you will take me I will take you.

Jesus said,

John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

Other people who knew Jesus Christ introduced me to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and having Him in my life changed my life!

John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

If you come to Him He will give you eternal life.
If you do not come to Him you will not have eternal life.

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE IS WRAPPED UP IN THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST.

Think of what Jesus said, and all Scripture says:

John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

I John 5:12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

I Corinthians 16:22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

John 1:12 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:

Jesus said He was the way the truth and the life.
Jesus said He was the gate that leads to eternal life.
Jesus said He was the light of the world.
Jesus said He was the living water (to the woman at the well).
Jesus said He was the good shepherd that gives His life for His sheep.
Jesus said my sheep hear my voice.

On and on we read in the Scripture that Jesus made it clear that there was no other way a person could be saved except they come to Him.

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Do you have a personal relationship with Him? Are you searching for knowledge or are you searching for a relationship? Only through a relationship with Christ can you be saved.

We have these promises:

Hebrews 13:5 ... he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.
John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Conclusion:

How do you explain this personal relationship between a saved person and Christ.. The best illustration is marriage. Marriage is a physical picture of the spiritual relationship between Christ and someone who has a personal relationship with Christ. It is not a physical marriage but a

spiritual marriage. Your spiritual marriage is far more important than your physical marriage. Physical marriage is till death do you part, spiritual marriage is for eternity. Jesus called his church His bride. Are you part of that bride?

Marriage is intimate, so our relationship with Christ is intimate
Marriage is personal, so our relationship with Christ is personal
Marriage is when two people live together in one house.

So when you receive Christ He will send His spirit to live in your body, one house.

Marriage is a commitment, so when you receive Christ you commit to Him.