

Discerner of Hearts

John 2:23-25

23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. 24 But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, 25 and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man. NKJV

I what seems to be a strange turn of events Jesus does not seek after the crowds that have gathered around Him. Instead He moves on, back to Galilee. Why does He do that?

It is because He knows even the hearts of those who follow Him. He knows that their faith is based on the wrong element. Their faith is not based on His teaching for they will not accept Jesus for who He really is but only for who they think He is. Is there a tendency today for people to remake Jesus into what they want Him to be rather than who he really is? The answer is obvious.

But the key to this is that although many people are fooled by people's false sense of piety, yet Jesus is never fooled. For He looks at our hearts. Let us consider this passage today.

I. Some people's faith is deficient.

A. That is why the apostle Paul said:

1. 2 Cor 13:5-6 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? — unless indeed you are disqualified. 6 But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified. NKJV
 - a. He encourages us to examine ourselves.
 - b. Look into our hearts and our actions and words and answer the question carefully.
2. 1 Cor 15:1-2 Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you — unless you believed in vain. NKJV
 - a. To believe in vain is to have a faith not centered on Jesus.
 - b. It is to be looking somewhere else.
 - c. Jesus knows our hearts better than we do ourselves.

B. Later on in Jesus ministry in John 6, He loses almost His followers because Jesus was not who they wanted Him to be.

1. John 6:66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go

away?" NKJV

2. They were looking for a Jesus who could feed the multitudes, but that is not what He came to do.
3. He had not come to be their servant, He had come to be their Master.

II. Not even miracles will produce genuine faith.

- A. Genuine faith is produced by the grace of God in our hearts.
- B. It come by the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration.
- C. When we develop a faith out side the work of God it is a fake and will not prevail.
- D. But if our faith is the work of God in our hearts then it cannot fail for it is God that works in us.
 1. Phil 2:12-13 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. NKJV

III. Jesus knows the weakness and strength of our faith.

IV. But Jesus did not forsake them, they forsook Jesus.

V. He did not commit Himself to them because He knew what was in them.

- A. Notice in Psalms 139:1-24 how God sees us so clearly.
- B. O Lord, You have searched me and known me. 2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. 3 You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O Lord, You know it altogether. 5 You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it. 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me; 12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You. 13 For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. 17 How precious also are Your thoughts

to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! 18 If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You. 19 Oh, that You would slay the wicked, O God! Depart from me, therefore, you bloodthirsty men. 20 For they speak against You wickedly; Your enemies take Your name in vain. 21 Do I not hate them, O Lord, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? 22 I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies. 23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; 24 And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

C. The early church understood this also.

1. Acts 1:24 (NKJV) And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen

D. Samuel learned it when looking for a king.

1. 1 Samuel 16:6-7 (NKJV) 6 So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him." 7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Can Jesus commit Himself to us today. Or like those of old, are we committed to someone else, to something else. Are there things in our life that are more important than Him. You know that is something that we all need to think about lest we go about fooling ourselves. You know what Jeremiah said.

Jeremiah 17:9 (NKJV) "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"

David of old prayed that God would show him his own heart. To reveal secret sin, sin that David had simply pushed away, out of this conscience. O let that be our prayer today. That God would show us the depravity of our own hearts.

Millions of people say, "Oh I believe in God." When nothing is farther from the truth. What a tragedy to consider yourself a believer all your life and then to one day stand before Jesus and have His say, depart from Me for I never knew you.

Never knew you. Those words will ring in the ears for all eternity. I never knew you. What a tragedy.