

## FAULTY FAITH

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March 8, 2020

John 2:18-25

1. Jesus had arrived in Jerusalem for the Passover and immediately got the attention of the Jewish leadership by driving the moneychangers and animal sellers out of the Temple's outer court.
2. We can surmise that Jesus' authority and zeal were on display because rather than resist they all scattered.
3. Here we see the aftermath of Jesus' actions as He stood in the midst of the mess He had created being approached by various Jewish leaders.
4. They asked Him, "What sign (proof of Your authority) do You show us, seeing that You do these things?"
  - a. Jesus' cleansing of the Temple was in itself a sign since it was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. 17, Psalm 69:9
  - b. As we will see later what Jesus had done, and was doing, spoke to Nicodemus, and ultimately changed the direction of his life.
- (5. Most modern day Gospel preaching and presentations focus on trying to get people to make a decision for Christ, when in reality becoming a Christian is an act of obedience in response to God's command that we repent towards God and believe the Gospel.
  - a. Jesus declared, "All authority has been given to Me in Heaven and on earth." Matthew 28:18
  - b. Paul expanded on this thought in Philippians 2:5-13.

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 **but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant**, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.** 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. 12 So then, my beloved, **just as you have always obeyed**, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

**NOTE: Too many professed followers of Jesus Christ are still in the driver's seat, having made a decision rather than a capitulation to Jesus Christ and His absolute authority.**
  - c. Note how people responded to Peter's anointed message on the Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:36-37

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified." 37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "**Brethren, what shall we do?**"

NOTE: In other words, "What does God require of us? What must we do?")
6. Now let's get back to our text.

## I. A clear declaration.

A. Jesus responded, "Destroy this temple (this sanctuary), and in three days I will raise it up."

B. Jesus was referring to the temple of His body and the fact that He would be resurrected from the dead.

C. The Jewish leaders were not sincerely seeking God, rather they were seeking to discredit Jesus; something they often did. Matt 12:38-40

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." 39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; 40 for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

NOTE: God responds to sincerity and not insincerity.

D. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the ultimate, defining sign, or proof, that Jesus was, and is, the divine Son of God. Acts 17:30-34

"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, 31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, **having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.**" 32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, but others said, "We shall hear you again concerning this." 33 So Paul went out of their midst. 34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them."

## II. A false application.

A. Rather than humbly and honestly seeking an explanation the Jewish leaders totally missed the truth Jesus was declaring.

B. Even Jesus' disciples did not fully understand until after Jesus was raised from the dead.

C. The Jewish leaders were men who:

1. Professed to worship God.
2. Were knowledgeable about the Scriptures.
3. Were looking for the Messiah to come.
4. Saw themselves as spiritual individuals.
5. Were unable to comprehend or understand the things of God.

D. The ability to comprehend and apply spiritual truth is directly related to our relationship with the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 2:12-16

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, 13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. 14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. 15 But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. 16 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

## III. A faulty faith.

A. "Many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing."

1. These people were attracted to Jesus by the signs that He was performing, but their faith was only a form of faith and not saving faith.

2. John pointed out this problem on two other occasions.

a. John 6:1-2, 26

After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). 2 A large crowd followed Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick...26 Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled."

NOTE: In this instance when He finished speaking we read, "As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore."

b. John 8:30-32, 59

As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him. 31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."...59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

B. Here we see that Jesus did not believe in them because He knew that their faith was faulty.

C. Jesus made it clear in the Parable of the Sower that not every profession of faith is genuine and life changing. Matthew 13:18-23

"Hear then the parable of the sower. 19 "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road. 20 "The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has **no firm root** in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. 22 "And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. 23 "And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

D. We get some insight into what Jesus was saying here when we read 2 Peter 1:5-11.

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, 6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, 7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; 11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

## APPLICATION

1. A genuine response to the Gospel has measurable and observable results. 2 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things have passed away; behold new things have come.

2. We can afford to be wrong about a lot of things and it really does not matter in the end, but we had better be right about our relationship with the Lord.