



February 12, 2023

“Believe the Evidence”

SS 9:30, Service at 10:30 with King’s Kids.

News:

Wednesday Evening Classes 6:30-8:00

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

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Those who are His, believe and obey Him. Belief is the prerequisite for _____, which is prerequisite to being His. What enables that initial belief?

The Holy Spirit enables belief by revealing the _____ (John 15:26). The thing that enables reception of that Message is personal _____.

Pride is a destroyer (Proverbs 16:18, James 4:6, Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11, 18:14, etc.). To be _____ by God, does not mean praised, it means Saved.

Fear causes _____. The biggest cause of fear is that we think that we are smarter and more important than we are. If I am nothing – if it is “no longer I who lives, but Christ Jesus Who lives in me” (Galatians 2:20) – then I don’t fear, I trust.

If you are busy about His work, you won’t have _____ to fear.

He has commanded you to ____ others by allowing Him to minister to them through you.

Your God-anointed _____ presently is to be a humble... What?

If you are having trouble figuring it out, don’t _____, just do.

Pray earnestly that the Holy Spirit _____ you. Then standby.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

He gives eternal life to His own. They will never perish. They cannot be taken from His hand... All three things mean the _____.

JOHN 10:31-33 ~

By tying His works to the Father what Jesus was implying was that there could not possibly be anything in His person, His teaching, or His actions, which could ever be construed as _____ against God, because it was God Himself working in and through Him.

To them, it was the _____. Since what Jesus said was blasphemous, then the many good works had to be _____ as some kind of trickery.

For them it was _____ that Jesus was a Godly man, let alone God made man.

It never occurred to them that it was their interpretation and application of the Scripture that was _____. We do the same.

One of the very few things that terrified the Apostle Paul was _____ God. Because I have faith, I don't need to know everything. Because I have wisdom, I must be very careful not to be _____.

JOHN 10:34-36 ~

PSALM 82:1-8 ~

Because they abused those whom they were charged with caring for, leading, and protecting, God reminded them that they were mere _____, they would die, and then they would face Him for _____.

There is no way that Jesus was comparing _____ to those gods, who were, in fact, mere men and evil leaders bound for destruction.

Jesus' rhetorical point of comparison was that the Jews had no _____ with Psalm 82, so why would they automatically have a _____ with His claim? The implication was that they should investigate the evidence without emotion.

JOHN 10:37-39 ~

They tracked well with His argument but _____ to learn anything from it.

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____
Phone _____ Email _____



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the gospel of
JOHN

ΕΝΑΡΧΗ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ
 ΘΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΕ ΤΗ ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΣΥ ΤΟΣ Η ΝΕΝΑΡΧΗ ΤΙΡΟΣ
 ΤΟ Ν ΘΗ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕ ΤΟ ΚΑΧΑΤΙΣ



It's Christmastime in Jerusalem – Maybe not like this...Yet.



The Jewish Feast of Dedication, known as Hanukkah, is in full swing. Jesus is in the Temple courts, specifically in the Portico of Solomon along the eastern wall looking directly at the entrance to the Holy of Holies.

Those Jewish elites and their minions, who are adamantly opposed to Jesus, are out in force this morning and they have surrounded Jesus. They have encircled Him with hostile intent. They angrily ask Him to plainly tell them what He intends to do.

Jesus explained to them that He had been telling them all along with both His words and His deeds, both Who He was and what He was going to accomplish. He then said to them that they did not believe Him because they could not believe. And why was that? Quite simply because they were not His.

Stubborn and unteachable because... Someone must be right, and it might as well be me.



He then clarified the reason that they were not His. He said it was because those who are His, 1) hear His voice, 2) He knows them, and 3) they follow Him (John 10:27). What that means is that those who are His, believe and obey Him – you could say, like the old song, that they “Trust and obey.”

Interesting, isn't it? Belief is the prerequisite, or the precondition, or the prequalification that is necessary for being able to believe, which is, in turn, the prerequisite to being His. Put another way, you must believe Him, in order to believe Him, in order to be His.

I suppose the smart person would want to know what it is that enables that initial belief. Well fortunately, the Bible plainly and repeatedly shares that bit of information... The thing that enables initial belief is... Wait for it... Personal humbleness.

Obviously, at least I hope that it's obvious, it is the Holy Spirit Who ultimately enables faith, both initial and beyond, but He does so by revealing the Truth of Christianity to a person. While Jesus exists as the Truth, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. Just as Jesus taught in John 15:26 to come He said, "When the Helper (or παράκλητος (pä-řä-klā-tös), the other Paraclete) comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, namely, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, He will testify about Me, 27and you are testifying as well, because you have been with Me from the beginning." The thing that opens a person's ears, and then their mind, and then their heart, and then their actions, to that Truth that the Holy Spirit testifies to, is personal humbleness. It is the humility of admitting that you may not know, that you are not automatically right, that there may be another way to go.

Pride is a destroyer. Pride is what got Satan and all his demonic friends condemned. Pride is what beguiled

Eve and what entrapped Adam. Pride is what will keep a non-Christian spiritually dead, and pride is what will keep a Christian from being of use to the Lord's purposes in building the Kingdom of God, both within them, and around them. Pride is the destroyer.

Proverbs 16:18, "Pride goeth before destruction, And an haughty spirit before a fall." James 4:6b, "God is (actively) opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Jesus taught, "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11, 18:14, etc.). To be exalted in that way, does not mean praised, it means Saved.

The Bible teaches, and experience confirms, that the single biggest cause of all our problems in this life is our proclivity to think more highly of ourselves than is warranted. More evil is perpetrated and perpetuated in this world due to human arrogance – due to our overinflated sense of self-worth – than any other single cause.

You might say, I thought that fear was the biggest cause of evil. Right, it is, but easily the biggest cause of our fear is that we first believe that we are smarter and

more important than we are. In general, we fear that things will not go the way we think that they should and so we intervene, with often far-reaching and devastating effects. You can see the ego involved in 1) thinking that you know best, in 2) thinking that you can predict how things will unfold, and in 3) thinking that your intervention will work the way you think that it will. If instead, you humbly trust God, you don't fear the future.

Beyond that is the personal fear of being rejected, of being mistreated, of being disrespected. It's only when I'm prideful enough to believe that I deserve a modicum of respect, a degree of comfort, and a certain level of acceptance, that I fear not receiving those things. If I am nothing – if it is “no longer I who lives, but Christ Jesus Who lives in me” (Galatians 2:20) – then I don't fear rejection.

Now I'm not talking Buddhism here, I'm talking Christianity. As such, I am supposed to be dead and buried already. What presently lives is a “reborn from above,” Holy Spirit filled, sheep in the one true flock, following the one true Shepherd. I don't have time to fear if I'm busy about His work. I have nothing to fear if I am less and He is more.

Find your worth in Him, find your peace about the future in Him. If you do, then you shouldn't be concerned about you; you should be concerned about closely following the Shepherd. He has commanded you and me to love others by allowing Him to minister through us. In my particular situation His ministry through me is to be a humble preaching teacher as the leader of a small sub-flock of fellow sheep. That's His present role for me. In your particular situation His ministry through you is to be a humble... What? Your God-anointed role presently is to be a humble... What?

It is my considered advice, that you hear the voice of the great high Shepherd and figure that out and then obey, fully trusting Him with the results.

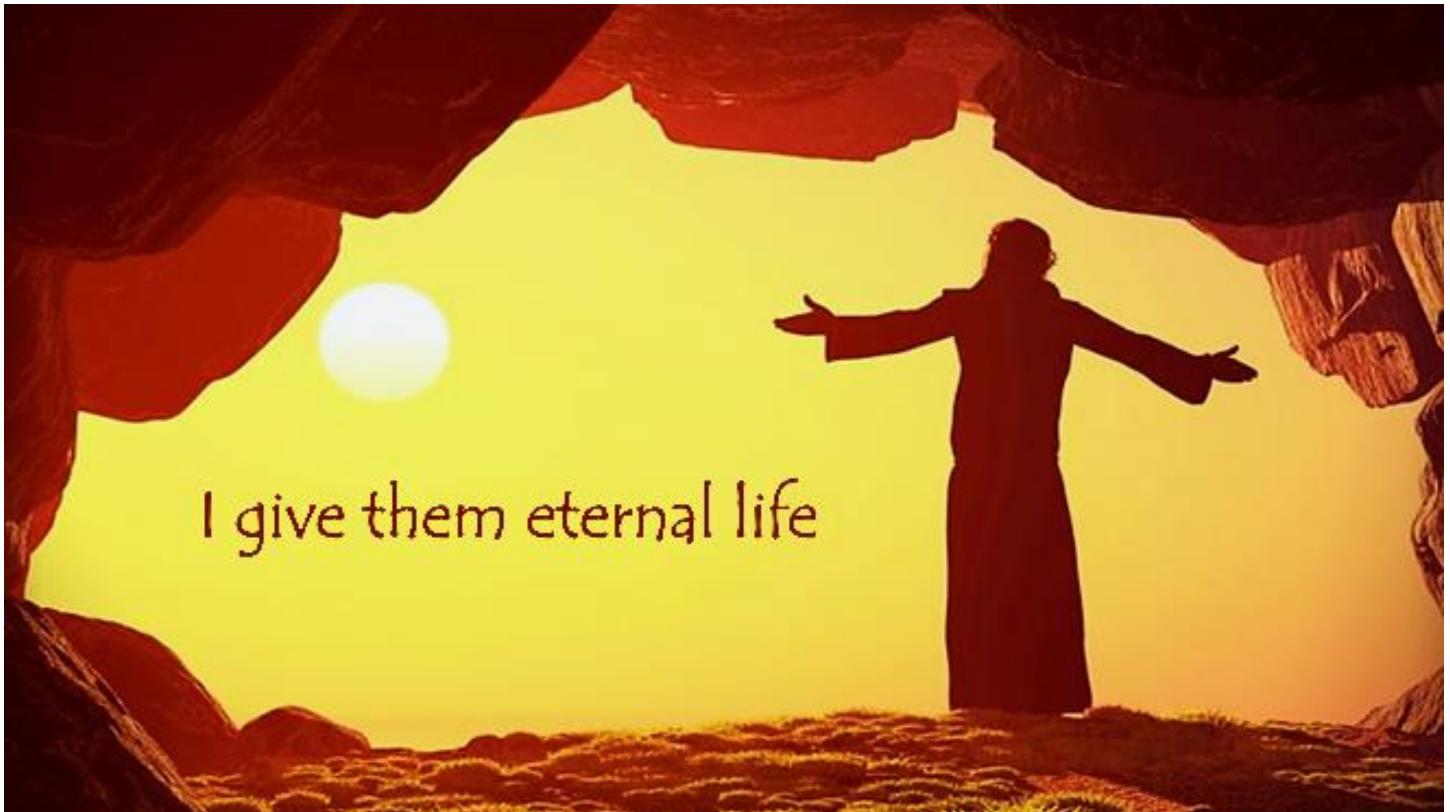
If you are having trouble figuring it out, don't wait until you do, because you probably won't. Instead get busy where God is already working and before you know it you will be employed by the King in the role that He has for you.

Again, belief is the prerequisite for belief which is the prerequisite to be His and now we know the prerequisite to further hear His voice in submitting to

the ministry He has for you. And it is personal humbleness that is the prerequisite for initial belief. Personal humbleness is how you hear His voice in both the first place and thereafter.

I feel like I've got to say one last word on this "humbleness" thing. It's far too easy for a person to see arrogance all around them and feel like that are personally quite humble. If you feel like an overinflated sense of self-worth is not your problem, it's only because you are too full of yourself to see it. Because, trust me, it is everybody's problem.

I'm not intentionally trying to irritate you; I'm trying to get you to see the truth that you think too highly of yourself. Pray earnestly that the Holy Spirit humbles you. Now, if you're smart, you know what that means, and you'll be afraid to follow through. By seeking a humble spirit from the Holy Spirit, you will be humbled, perhaps painfully so, but you'll also be positioned to one day be exalted by the only One Who truly matters. Don't be this guy.



All of that was basically bonus material. Back to the review... Jesus went on to tell them that 1) He gives eternal life to His own. 2) That they will never perish and 3) that they cannot be taken from His hand... All three things mean the same thing. To never perish, is to have eternal life and eternal life is to never be lost – it's three different ways to say that at the moment of rebirth as a Christian, you are granted life in Christ forever – period, end of story – amen.

And how can Jesus give that kind of eternal security? His hand is God's hand as He and the Heavenly Father are one. With these statements the Jews had only one of two choices. Believe Him and bow down or bow

down and pick up stones to murder Him. That's our review.



John 10:31-39, 31The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. 32Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?” 33The Jews answered Him, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.”

This is the easy part for today. It's pretty straightforward until we get to verse 34, which is why I stopped here at verse 33 for now. Jesus had said that He both told them and showed them Who He was and what He was

going to do. Their response was to kill Him, so He asked them, why? Precisely, what is it that I have shown you, that causes this extreme and violent reaction of yours? They retorted, it's not what you did, but what you said.

See the irony? In our previous passage Jesus tied His supernatural works with His words. They insist on keeping the two things separate because they could not reasonably show their displeasure over His “many good works.”

It's difficult to argue with the healing of a man who was crippled for 38 years, and the feeding thousands of people from five loaves and two fish, and the giving of sight to a man who was born blind.

Note that Jesus, once again, dramatically tied His “many good works” directly to God as being “from the Father.” The general sense was that Jesus had repeatedly portrayed Himself as a vessel through Whom God acted supernaturally to accomplish His many beautiful miracles.

By tying His works to the Father what He was really implying was that there could not possibly be anything

in His person, or in His teaching, or in His actions, which could ever be construed as blasphemy against God, because it was God Himself working in and through Him.

Jesus equated His “many good works from the Father,” as manifestations confirming both His Who He was and what He was doing – both His identity and His intentions. The basic concept was, if you won’t believe My words – believe the “many good works of the Father” wrought through Me by God.

To them, it was precisely the reverse. Since what Jesus said was blasphemous, then the many good works had to be dismissed out of hand as irrelevant, or as a test, or as some kind of trickery.

Their charge was two-fold. It was general blasphemy, which was a relatively subjective allegation and then the more specific accusation of claiming equality with God. They grounded their indictment by first establishing their belief that Jesus was a mere “man.” “You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.”

Obviously, they hadn’t read the prologue of this Gospel. We know that their assumption was wrong,

and we know that they should have known better, but they refused to even entertain the possibility, because the possibility didn't fit their expectation.

For them it was utterly impossible that Jesus was a Godly man, let alone God made man. God would never violate one of His own Commandments and yet Jesus repeatedly broke the Sabbath Commandment. He could not possibly be anything other than a deceiver in league with Satan to lead the people astray.

It never occurred to them that it was their interpretation and application of the Sabbath Commandment that was the thing that was faulty. We Christians make precisely the same type of mistake today.

I cannot begin to tell you how many times a week I hear a Christian spout absolute nonsense as though it were God's Word. I've mentioned it many times before, but it's worth mentioning again.

One of the very few things that terrified the Apostle Paul was misrepresenting God. The Bible teaches that if a person speaks for God and they are wrong, they are to be stoned. A prophet, by Biblical definition, is the mouthpiece of God. Unlike a preaching teacher, every

prophetic word must be precisely accurate – there is no leeway whatsoever for embellishment, hyperbole, or inaccuracy.

When I was a young Christian, I desperately wanted to know it all – I wanted every conceivable question thoroughly answered. I wanted to be right. As I matured, I realized that being right is not important... What's critically vital though, is not being wrong.

Because I have faith, I don't need to know everything. Because I have wisdom, I must be very careful to ensure that I'm not wrong. It's far, far, better to say to someone, I don't know that answer, but I do know The Answer and I'd love to introduce you to Him. What you never want to do is present God falsely. If you are going to speak for God, you better not be wrong.

The Jews not only misrepresented God with their interpretation and application of His Word, they missed their opportunity to be given eternal life because of their stubbornness in doubling down on their faulty interpretation and application when it was called into question.

That's pride and it prevented them from embracing Jesus and being Saved. What is pride preventing in your life?



Now on to the difficult bit... John 10:34-36, 34 Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? 35 "If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), 36 do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"

Their charge: "You, being a man, making yourself out to be God," is blasphemy worthy of death. To which, Jesus responded with a Bible quotation and a question.

It is one of those bits of the Bible where people with limited knowledge, working from a translated text, misrepresent God.

Many people, like Muslims and Mormons, claim that Jesus was minimizing His earlier claim. Essentially, He was saying, “oh you misunderstood me, you don’t need to kill Me, I was only saying that since God is the spiritual Father of us, we are therefore all gods in that sense, just like the people who God called gods in Psalm 82.”

A similar view, by folks like the Jehovah’s Witnesses, is that Jesus was saying that He was a god, but a lesser god than the big God, who, like others in the Bible, was called by the big God to administer His Word on earth as a little god.

Another ridiculously ignorant take on the passage, by people like those in the Word of Faith Movement, is that Jesus was confirming that all of God’s children are little gods in their own right.

Again, incorrect understanding of the context, the grammatical syntax, and the rhetorical style, creates

problems in interpretation, that then leads to faulty doctrines and applications.

So, since none of that is it, what's going on? 1) First, we need to understand Jesus' rhetorical point. 2) Second, we need to recognize that Jesus was quoting Psalm 82:6 "I said, you are gods." 3) Next, we need to note that it was Hannukah – a rededication of what was profaned by a man claiming to be a living god. 4) Finally, we need to remember that the Jewish leaders for centuries had been, and still were, outrageously unjust in their judgments.

We must also recognize the Jewish practice of applying an entire passage by quoting a portion. It isn't good enough to read the part of Psalm 82, verse 6, that Jesus quoted. Like the Rabbis of old we too need to read the whole thing in order to have the proper context of the quotation.

¹“God takes His position in His assembly; He judges in the midst of the gods...”

²How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?

³Vindicate the weak and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and destitute. ⁴Rescue the weak and needy; save them from the hand of the wicked.

⁵They do not know nor do they understand; they walk around in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

⁶I said, ‘You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High. ⁷Nevertheless you will die like men, and fall like one of the princes.’”

Psalm 82:1–8 NASB20, Verse 1, “God takes His position in His assembly; He judges in the midst of the gods.” The one true God is omnipotent, or all powerful. What does that mean? It means that He owns all the power that exists, and He loans out some of His power to others – all the way from angels to you, and all the way from Satan to Wagner Group mercenary war criminals.

In a special way God loaned His power and authority to the rulers of the Jews – specifically here it is those appointed as judges of the people. God as the Source judges His appointed judges, here called “gods.” They

are called “gods” because they exercise God’s power and authority.

¹“God takes His position in His assembly; He judges in the midst of the gods...

²**How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?**

³Vindicate the weak and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and destitute. ⁴Rescue the weak and needy; save them from the hand of the wicked.

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In verse 2, God begins judging the judges starting with a question for them...

“2How long will you judge unjustly And show partiality to the wicked?

¹“God takes His position in His assembly; He judges in the midst of the gods...

²How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?

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⁶I said, ‘You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High. ⁷Nevertheless you will die like men, and fall like one of the princes.’”

Then God Judges them with a demand... ³Vindicate the weak and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and destitute. ⁴Rescue the weak and needy; Save them from the hand of the wicked.

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⁶I said, ‘You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High. ⁷Nevertheless you will die like men, and fall like one of the princes.’”

Next, God Judges them with a conclusion about them... ⁵They do not know nor do they understand; They walk around in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are shaken.

¹“God takes His position in His assembly; He judges in the midst of the gods...

²How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?

³Vindicate the weak and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and destitute. ⁴Rescue the weak and needy; save them from the hand of the wicked.

⁵They do not know nor do they understand; they walk around in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

⁶I said, ‘You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High. ⁷Nevertheless you will die like men, and fall like one of the princes.’”

Finally, God Judges them with His Judgment... 6I said, “You are gods, And all of you are sons of the Most High. 7“Nevertheless you will die like men, And fall like one of the princes.” The NIV puts that final bit as... 6“I said, ‘Rulers and judges, you are “gods.” You are all children of the Most High God.’ 7But you will die, just like everyone else. You will die like every other ruler.”



Human leaders were and still are established by God to protect and care for the people, not to line their own pockets and massage their own egos at the expense of the people. The Bible is clear that we humans must have human leadership in order to function civilly as a society and that it is God Who gives us both government and the governing authorities.

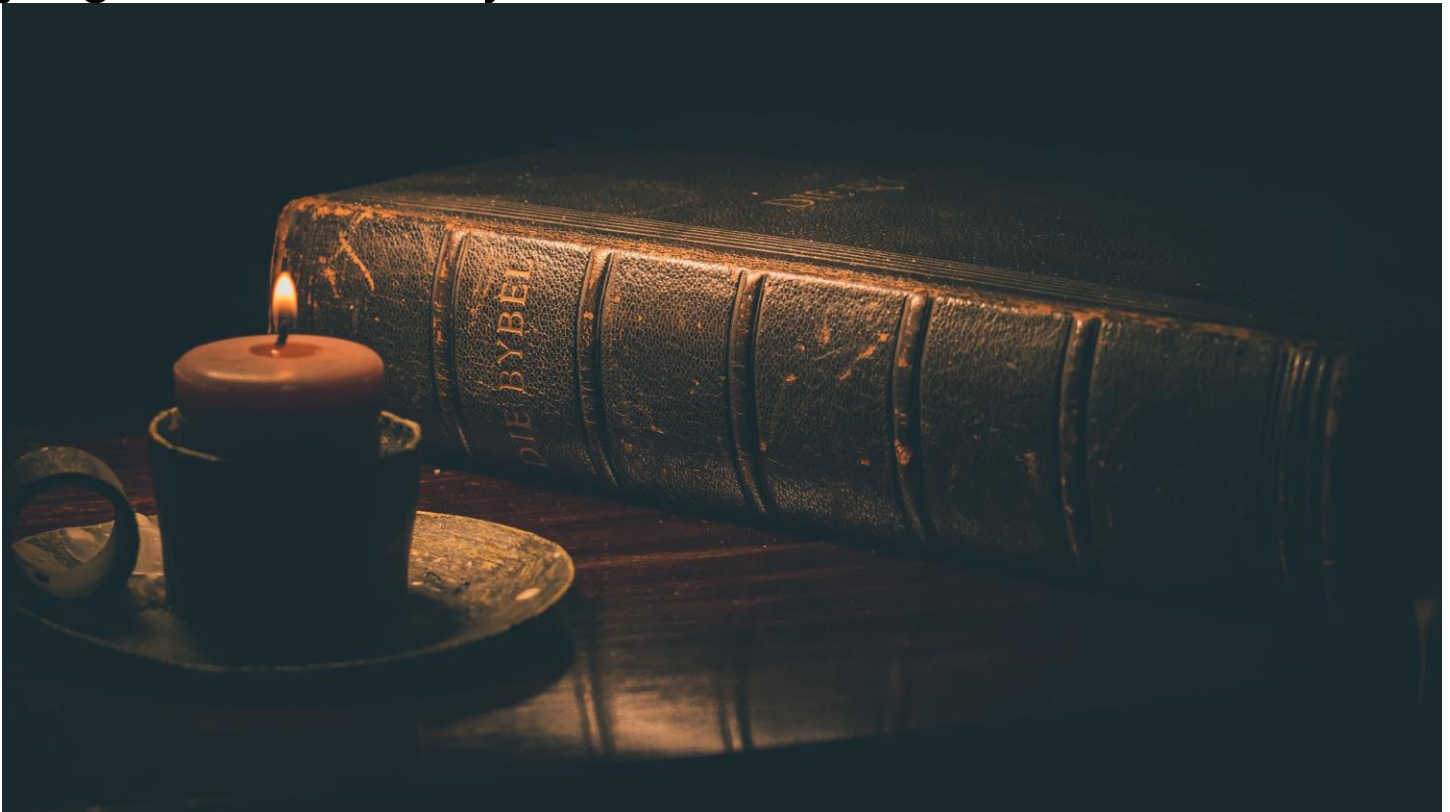


Today is not about that topic, but if I were to say more, it would be that sin corrupts the institution as a whole, because sin corrupts the leaders as individuals. Just because that's true, it does not in any way let those leaders off the hook with God. In our unusual form of government where we elect our leaders, we get the leaders we deserve, and so, to some degree, we share in their Judgment by God.

The charge God made against those representing Him as the leaders of His people in Psalm 82 was the same as the charge Jesus made against the Jewish leaders of His day. They are God's agents carrying out His

decrees and judgments and as such they wield His power and authority – they are gods in that sense.

Because they arrogantly abused those whom they were charged with caring for, leading, and protecting, God reminded them that they were mere humans and that they would die just like any other mere human and that then they would face Him for judgment. A judgment... already decreed.



The context of Jesus' quotation was that God called such men "gods" in His Holy, unshakeable, and eternal Word, even though they used their position for evil, vile, self-serving, and corrupt purposes that would see them condemned to the fiery pit.

First, there is no way that Jesus was comparing Himself to those gods, who were, in fact, mere men and evil leaders bound for destruction. Second, He would also never use the reference concerning evil men to say that Christians are gods or that all people have a divine spark.

Jesus' rhetorical point for the Jews was primarily that they would never dream of charging the Psalmist with blasphemy for writing that God Himself called those evil men "gods," so why then, would they charge Him with blasphemy for calling Himself the Son of God?

The point of comparison has nothing to do with Jesus comparing Himself to the judges of Psalm 82. The comparison that He was drawing was that the Jews had no problem with Psalm 82, so why would they automatically have a problem with His claim?

In other words, there was no blasphemy in what Jesus was claiming about Himself, IF it were true. The implication was that they shouldn't fly off the handle, they should carefully investigate without emotion, His claim, and His proof.

I said that was the primary rhetorical point, but there's more to it, because while Jesus obviously knew the context of His quotation, so did His audience. People back then did not have access to a smartphone, or a laptop, or an eBook, or even a physical book and if they did, they generally couldn't read anyway. People back then memorized vast amounts of information.

The Jews then, as many Jews and Christians today, made it a matter of religious pride to memorize Scripture. It is safe to say that the people encircling Jesus in our pericope knew at least the Torah and the Psalms by heart. Any one of them could have quoted Psalm 82 back to Jesus in its entirety. They knew precisely what He was arguing.

They knew the context, that the judges appointed as gods, would die like men because they were doing the works of men. Here Jesus was doing the works of God and they saw Him only as a man, not as the God that He was. That's irony.



Since they easily understood the nuance of His primary point, Jesus pressed it further, but to be candid, it would take a lot for us to really explore it. Let me just sum it up by saying that in verse 36 Jesus distinguishes Himself from the evil leaders the Psalmist wrote about, by declaring that He was “sanctified and sent into the world” by the Heavenly Father as the unique One and Only Son of God.

He has already made the point that He is the Good Shepherd unlike the evil shepherds of Psalm 82 and the evil shepherds surrounding Him in Solomon’s Portico. He personally gives eternal life to those who believe in Him, which as we saw last week is life in the

presence of God without end and so is the same thing as eternal security where nothing can take them, take us, out of His hand, which is the very hand of God.

Jesus wasn't in any way, shape, or form, shying away from claiming that He was God made flesh – quite the reverse.

He declared in verse 36, even though it was by way of a question, "I am the Son of God." Remember that way back in John 5:18, we saw that "the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Jesus, because He... was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God."

So, Jesus was setting the stage with His reference to the Psalm, to get their attention and calm them down so that they would examine the evidence...

John 10:37-39, 37 "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." 39 Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

Obviously, they tracked well with His argument because at the end they wanted to murder Him all the more. Just as obviously, Jesus wasn't diminishing His claim to be "equal with God." Also, just as obviously, the Jews refused to accept His encouragement from the Psalm to a sound examination of the evidence, instead of an emotional rush to judgment.

Again, the basic disconnect was that Jesus claimed that His works confirmed His words. The Jews could only see that His words were unbelievable. They were outrageous and blasphemous. Therefore, His works were irrelevant, they had to be dismissed.



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JOHN 10:37-39 ~

They tracked well with His argument but failed to learn anything from it.

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____