

7.22.18 ~ John 12:34-36, "The Darkness of Disbelief!"

Read John 12:31-34... In **verse 31**, Jesus pronounced a verdict on the devil's authority, calling him "the ruler of this world" [the "world" being everyone/ everything that opposes and/or rejects God].

In **Ephesians 2:2**, the devil is called "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit... working in the sons of disobedience."

1John 3:8 says, "for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil." When Jesus declared, "It is Finished!" the devil's authority on the earth and power over mankind was crushed; for it was on the Cross, (cf. **John 12:32**) that Jesus was "lifted up from the earth," in order that He might "draw all men to [Himself]."

John makes it clear in **verse 33** that this "being lifted up" was the type of death by which Jesus would die.

Look at **verse 34** again, the people were unable to get their minds around any teaching that would promote the Messiah or Son of Man being put to death; for they understood that He would remain [live] forever.

Daniel 7:13-14 tells us Messiah [Son of Man] would come and defeat all of God's enemies and set up an eternal kingdom of peace and prosperity.

Jesus will eventually do that, but it was never to be before the cross, instead, it is written that it will happen when Jesus returns to earth at the end of the Tribulation, as a Conquering Victorious Warrior King (**Revelation 19**).

The crowd here (**verse 34**), is basically saying to Jesus, "what are you talking about, the Son of Man can't die, He lives forever, what Son of Man are you talking about?"

The thing is, **Isaiah 53** makes it very clear that the Messiah will die, but that He won't stay dead; and that is exactly what Jesus is saying to them, but they are spiritually deaf and cannot understand what He is saying.

Read John 12:35-36... Jesus' crucifixion is only a few days away. Jesus is the Light of the World (see **John 1:4-9; 3:19-21; 8:12; 9:4-5; 12:46**).

Jesus will only be among the people for a short time longer; He is exhorting them to walk in the Him, i.e., to believe in and follow Him, as sons of Light [children of God], while the Light of God is still with them.

This is the gospel, that everyone who believes in God's Son will have the Light of God, having received Life from God through Christ, i.e., forgiveness and eternal life.

See **Matthew 5:14-15...** This exemplifies God's Church, the people of God, as a lighted city on a hill; travelers in the valley below or on hills far away can see the lights of this city, it serves as a beacon to them.

See **Matthew 5:16...** Believers are like the individual oil lamps in the houses, providing light to the occupants. God makes it very clear that our purpose as

Christians, is to let God's light shine so that those living in darkness might find their way to God's love and forgiveness.

We are to live in such a way that unbelievers will see God in us, and ask us to give a reason for the way we live and what we believe.

God wants everyone to be saved (**Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13; 1Timothy 2:3-4; 2Peter 3:9**); but salvation is granted only to those who repent of their sin and acknowledge their need for the Savior, Jesus Christ (*The Roman Road: Romans 3:10-12, 23-24; 6:23, 5:8; 8:1; 10:9-10; Mark 1:14, 17; Acts 2:38*).

We were all, at one time, living in darkness, guilty of sin, separated from the Light and Life of God. But, believing in Christ brings you into the Light, where you receive Life from God.

Ephesians 2:1-3, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."

Ephesians 5:8-11, "for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them."

John 1:1-4, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men."

Hebrews 1:3 declares God's Son to be the "radiance of God's glory," for He is the very "Light" of God; and if Christ is in you, His Light will shine in and through your life.

God's plan from the very beginning, was to separate Light from Darkness, and He will one day remove Darkness forever (**Genesis 1:1-4; Revelation 21:1-4, 23; 22:3-5**).

Unbelievers are in darkness, spiritually dead and dying, they are basically walking dead men. We, God's people, have been equipped and commissioned by God to the ministry of reconciliation, exposing unbelievers to the God's Word, God's Light, that they might repent of their sins and receive forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus Christ (see **2Corinthians 5:14-21**).

1John 1:5-7, "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the

truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

Back to John 12:36... So, after urging the people to believe in and follow Him, so that they might have the Light and Life of God, Jesus now goes away, purposefully hiding Himself, for it is clear that they will not receive Him as their Messiah, but instead they remain in the darkness of unbelief.

See **John 8:21-24...** Jesus was telling them that He would be leaving and going back to the Father in heaven. In chapter 12, He is much closer to the Cross, so He is pouring His heart out to the people, urging them to believe in and receive Him, and yet they continue to reject Him, even though His death is imminent, when the lights will go out: while Jesus is on the cross, the Father will bring darkness over all the earth (at the brightest time of the day in Jerusalem, 12 noon), without the Light of Christ, the whole world is plunged into darkness.

When Jesus left the people and hid Himself (**verse 36**), He would no longer speak about the things of God publicly, or even privately, to anyone but the Twelve Disciples, not until after His own death and resurrection from the grave, when the Light of God would again be effectual, so that all who call upon the name of the Lord for the forgiveness of sins, will be saved!

Speaking to those who would genuinely believe in and receive Him, Jesus says (**Matthew 5:14-16**), “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

If you belong to God through Christ, you are to live as a child of the Light, so that unbelievers might be exposed to the Life and Light of God, and perhaps ask you to give the reason for the hope you have, and you can tell them, it is Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Lord and Savior, crucified for the sins of all according to the Scriptures, buried, and on the third day rose from the grave according to the Scriptures, showing Himself to hundreds of followers before going back to the Father in heaven; but He will return to gather all those who belong to Him, so that we might live with Him forever, in heaven.

And all God’s people said, Amen!

Pastor Michael

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