



TEEN TREE OF LIFE

The Light of the World Part 3

December 19, 2021

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called Rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1 JOH 1:9: *If we confess [name] our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

We ended last week's study with an argument between some Pharisees who had been present during The Lord Jesus Christ's teaching. On a particular day, they had challenged His Claim to be The Messiah. But Jesus took up their challenge and showed that what He was saying was true and that He had the witnesses to prove it – His Father. But the Pharisees wouldn't back down and challenged Our Lord again in **JOH 8:19-20 (The Message Bible):** *They [the Pharisees] said, "Where is this so-called Father of yours?" Jesus said, "You're looking right at me and you don't see me. How do you expect to see the Father? If you knew me, you would at the same time know the Father." He gave this speech in the Treasury while teaching in the Temple. No one arrested him because his time wasn't yet up.* They continued to completely reject what Our Savior had just said. They were hardening their hearts, which is an extremely dangerous response to The Truth but these men were already blind to what Jesus was claiming. Eventually they even blasphemed The Holy Spirit when they claimed that His Work was instead the work of Satan. But Jesus did not back away in the least as we read in **JOHN 8** when He tells the Pharisees that they don't know Him or His Father.

The reason that the Pharisees rejected Jesus Christ and would not recognize the truth of His claim is because they had already rejected God The Father. They were not interested in knowing Him and did not obey Him. The religious system they had created by perverting the Mosaic Law was all about earning their way to heaven according to their own self-righteous system. There are many people around today that are the same way. They have replaced The Law of God with their own rules and regulations. They have turned God – from The Loving Creator who desires a personal relationship with His

creatures – to an uninterested judge who can be manipulated by man. They did not know The Lord Jesus Christ because they did not know His Father.

John adds a comment in verse 20 that should be looked at more closely. He wrote: **“He gave this speech in the Treasury while teaching in the Temple. No one arrested him because his time wasn’t yet up.”** John’s purpose in including these comments is to point out the location where all this took place and to note that Jesus still had not been arrested. This area of the Temple was in immediate proximity to the hall where the Sanhedrin held its sessions. If ever there was a time to arrest Jesus and put Him on trial, this would be it. They were so close to the Sanhedrin’s Hall, that they could have quickly arrested Jesus and brought Him into their court. They understood what He had just been claiming and could have charged Him then with blasphemy – as they would later. But, as John points out, God is in control, and this was not yet Jesus’ hour for trial. That would not come for another six months when He would become the Passover Lamb and be The Substitute Sacrifice for our sins.

The confrontation between Jesus Christ and the Pharisees did not end there. Our Lord doesn’t let them get away but again challenges them by contrasting Himself with them. **JOH 8:21 (The Message Bible)** is actually a very serious warning to the Pharisees: **“Then he went over the same ground again. ‘I’m leaving and you are going to look for me, but you’re missing God in this and are headed for a dead end. There is no way you can come with me.’”** They continued in their charade and acted as if they didn’t understand, but they did get the point. They began talking among themselves, and certainly loud enough for Jesus to hear: **The Jews said, “So, is he going to kill himself? Is that what he means by ‘You can’t come with me’?” (JOH 8:22 The Message Bible)**

Now, this statement is even more obnoxious than it might seem at first glance. It’s a mocking statement. Jesus had just very directly told them that they would die in their sins. That makes it clear that He is talking about the locations where they would spend eternity and where He would spend eternity. They mock Our Savior saying that perhaps He would commit suicide, which was not uncommon during that time. But they’re making a real jab at Him because at that time, people believed that a person who commits suicide would go to hell because they have committed self-murder. This is also taught in some churches today. This couldn’t be more untrue. Unbelief is the only sin that sends you to hell.

Jesus tells them they will die in their sins with the clear implication that they are heading for hell, and they in turn mock Him by saying that perhaps He would kill himself with the implication that it would be Jesus that would go to hell. The irony of this is that Our Lord came for the purpose of dying as the substitute for all sin. He came to **“give His life as a ransom for many. (MATT 20:28 New American Standard Bible)** Isn’t it amazing to see the severe darkness in which the Pharisees lived? The Light of The World was in their very presence, and they were blind to Him.

So, Jesus now becomes even more direct in verse **JOH 8: 23-24 (New International Reader’s Version): “You are from below. I am from heaven. You are from this world. I am not from this world. I told you that you would die in your sins. This will happen if you don’t believe that I am he. If you don’t believe, you will certainly die in**

your sins.” Here, The Lord Jesus Christ contrasts Himself with the Pharisees again. He is from Heaven, and they are from earth. He is part of The Heavenly System, and they are part of the worldly system. What is amazing here is that Our Lord still gives them room to repent. He still gives them the opportunity to change their minds and recognize what He is saying and believe in Him and receive Eternal Life. But He is also clear about the consequences of rejecting Him. If you do not believe, you will die in your sins with no one to blame but yourself. You will not have an advocate when you stand before God for judgment. There will be a prosecutor, but no defense. It is a horrible thing to die still of unbelief because the condemnation received is for all eternity.

And still, the Pharisees challenge Jesus again in **JOH 8: 25**, when they ask Him, **“Who are You?”** This is not a sincere question seeking information, but a challenge to Him for making such a statement. It is more the sense of, “Who are you to say we must believe in you, or we will die in our sins?” Again, The Lord is very direct with them saying: **“What I’ve said from the start. I have so many things to say that concern you, judgments to make that affect you, but if you don’t accept the trustworthiness of the One who commanded my words and acts, none of it matters. That is who you are questioning—not me but the One who sent me.”** (JOH 8:26 The Message Bible) Jesus’ answer to their question is simply a challenge to think back to what He had already said. He doesn’t allow Himself to be sidetracked. He then proceeds to explain that He has much more to tell them and then continues in His explanation of His relationship with The Father. The one that sent Jesus is true and Jesus is only declaring to them that which He had heard from The Father.

JOH 7:27 (The Message Bible) explains it all about their reactions to all Our Lord and Savior had been saying to them: **They still didn’t get it, didn’t realize that he was referring to the Father.** They were that blind to the truth. But remember, ignorance, whether it’s willful or involuntary, is not an excuse. Jesus Christ is declaring The Truth and they are responsible for it. Now look at what John wrote next: **So Jesus tried again. “When you raise up the Son of Man, then you will know who I am—that I’m not making this up, but speaking only what the Father taught me. The One who sent me stays with me. He doesn’t abandon me. He sees how much joy I take in pleasing him.” When he put it in these terms, many people decided to believe.** (JOH 8:27-30 The Message Bible) So, we know from the last sentence that some had a change of heart. That’s very comforting, isn’t it?

And you can be sure that after Jesus Christ’s Resurrection, the Pharisees knew the truth about what had happened because the soldiers guarding Jesus’ tomb told them what happened. But they were committed to their own plan anyway and bribed the soldiers to lie. They heard the truth, but they still rejected it: **While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city. They reported to the chief priests all that had happened. When the chief priests met with the elders, they came up with a plan. They gave the soldiers a large amount of money. They told the soldiers, “We want you to say, ‘His disciples came during the night. They stole his body while we were sleeping.’ If the governor hears this report, we will pay him off. That will keep you out of trouble.” So the soldiers took the money and did as they were told. This story has spread all around among the Jews to this day.** (MATT 28:11-15 New International Reader’s Version)

This back-and-forth between The Lord Jesus Christ and the Pharisees is an important lesson in so many ways. Jesus Christ is The Light of The World. But most people – just like the Pharisees - reject that Light because they love the darkness. Think about how many people even in your own lives today who reject The Light of The World?

What about you? What do you believe about The Lord Jesus Christ? He is The Light of The World, and He gives The Light of Life. But if that is going to be of value to you, then you must follow Him. It doesn't do you any good to claim to believe in Him if you refuse to follow Him and walk in His Light. You do not have to stumble in the darkness of sin and its consequences. Turn on The Light! Learn His Word and obey what you read. Spend time in prayer and become sensitive to The Holy Spirit and follow His Prompting. In that way you will become like a city set on a hill shining its light for all to see. Our Lord and Savior's Light will shine through you to those still in darkness all around you.