

The Gospel According to Luke

Luke 11:29-36

Reading: Luke 11:29-36

Sermon #51

September 29, 2019

Final Judgment

Signs

In order to understand this text that is before us today we need to go back and revisit Jesus casting out an evil spirit from the mute man. Reading Luke chapter 11, beginning at verse 14, “Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. ¹⁵ But some of them said, ‘He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons,’ ¹⁶ while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven.”

Last week we read even though the crowd marveled, they kept demanding a sign from Jesus to authenticate His claims that He was sent from God. If they could not see Jesus as sent by God, they certainly could not believe Jesus was in fact is the Son of God, the long-awaited Messiah. Their demand was really two-fold. First, they wanted more signs and wonders because like modern day drug addiction there was never enough, they always want more. Second, they wanted Jesus to give them a ultimate sign to prove that His power to cast out evil spirits came from God and not from Satan. Jesus would provide an ultimate sign, but for most it still was not enough. Can you see how evil this is? They had concluded wrongly that all the miracles Jesus had done; feeding the 5000, walking on water, healing the sick, the deaf, the mute, the lame, and the raising of the dead, all happened through the power of Satan, not through the power of God. This is probably the pinnacle of evil and sin. They saw the Son of God perform miracles

and the crowd gave Satan credit. Remember what Matthew 12:31-32 says about the unpardonable sin.

Jesus had reasoned with this crowd. He tried to explain that for him to work for Satan was impossible because every kingdom that is divided will fall. He said, why would Satan cast out his own demons? His explanation fell on deaf ears. They had seen the miracles for themselves with their own eyes and their conclusion was not to glorify God but, in a sense, to glorify Satan. Their eyes and souls were blind to the truth because they belonged to the prince of the world. It is still true to this day that most are spiritually blind and deaf and belong to the prince of this world.

Now as we prepare to continue moving through Luke chapter 11, let's pause and lift up our time in the Word of God.

PRAY. Amen. My beloved, it is my hope, through our time in God's Word this morning that our eyes may see the unseen Christ and give Him glory and to this goal, I say, Amen!

Sign of Jonah

Look with me at verses 29 and 30 of Luke chapter 11, “**When the crowds were increasing, Jesus began to say, ‘This generation is an evil generation. It seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.’³⁰ For as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be to this generation.**” Jesus brings salvation, but he also will bring judgment. Jonah declared God's judgment was impending on the people of Nineveh and they repented. Jesus is not just a prophet like Jonah, but Jesus is the judge as the Christ, the God and the Son.

Israel is a nation chosen by God as his people, but it is also a nation who has been characterized by God as hardhearted and stubborn and stiff-necked. They lacked faith in God and his Son whom he sent. Their behavior and attitude shows where their allegiance lies, even though they claim God, they are truly anchored to the world. They would rather try to work their way to heaven, which is impossible, than trust and obey God and His Son, Jesus Christ. As we are taught in Paul's letter to the Galatians, "we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified." (Galatians 2:16) Salvation by works and man-made laws were a key factor in the Jewish nation not being able to let go of the world and believe by faith alone – *Sola Fide*.

Time and time again Jesus gave them signs meant to expose their desperate need for the Son of God, the long awaited Messiah as their Savior. He accomplished things in their sight that only God could do. Only God can stretch out His hand and rebuke the wind and waves and immediately there were calm waters. Only God can raise the dead and heal with a touch. Jesus gave them sufficient proof that He was who He said He was. What sort of sign would have been enough for them? Was there a sign that would finally convince them? Jesus is finished performing miracles for unbelievers. The time has come to call them what they truly are.

Luke tells us that the crowds were getting larger and larger and as the crowds grew Jesus made His assessment; the bigger the crowd grew, the more evil they became. The crowd grew so big and so evil that He now declares in verse 29, "This generation is an evil generation." This is a declaration of damnation; which should have brought the people to their knees, unfortunately, it did not. If they had

studied the Word of God they would have been aware of the truth God gave the prophet Isaiah and Paul later quoted in his letter to the Romans, “For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹ for it is written, ‘As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.’” (Romans 14:10-11 from Isaiah 45:23) This is what the Reformers meant by **Sola Scriptura**. These people were being given an opportunity to bow before the Son of God and receive heaven and if not, they would bow to Christ but be eternally separated in hell. The answers they sought were contained within the scriptures.

They were evil because the Word of God, the teachings and miracles of Christ should have brought to life faith within them, but instead they did not believe because of their hard hearts. They all saw the miracles with their own eyes and heard the scriptures with their ears, but because their souls were spiritually dead, they deduced that Satan was behind the teachings, works and miracles of Jesus. The truth was clear, Jesus taught in the power of God and accomplished miracles in the power of God, but they were blind. The miracles were to substantiate Jesus’ teaching and his authority. These people were not asking for a sign to believe but they were asking for some sign to condemn Jesus and claim he was empowered by Satan. This is blasphemy. When one gives Satan credit for the work of God, one is guilty of blasphemy. Paul wrote of this same problem, ¹⁹ “For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.” (Romans 1:19-21) This problem

of mankind's darkened heart remains to this day and will remain until Christ's return.

Jesus is finished – he is finished with the miracles and signs – that is, except one final sign.

What was the one sign for these unbelieving Jews? To discover the answer, we will need to go to Matthew's Gospel and then travel back in time to the Old Testament. First reading from Matthew chapter 12, Jesus says, **“An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”** (Matthew 12:39-40) Jonah is a favorite Bible story, especially for children. I enjoy watching the Veggie-Tales' Jonah with my grandchildren. Remember Jonah rebelled against God because of his great dislike for the people of Nineveh. Jonah thought he could escape God by boat, God sent a great storm, the captain came to know the storm was sent by God because of Jonah attempt to run from God and had him thrown overboard. In verse 17 we read, **“the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.”** (Jonah 1:17) For Jonah 3 days and nights symbolized death. However, he did not die by the power of God. The large fish deposited Jonah on the beach in Nineveh where God was determined he would go. So, in our Luke passage, the great and final sign to all people is that Jesus Christ did die and he lay for 3 days and 3 nights in the tomb. However, by the power of God, he was raised from the dead, brought back to life and is alive at the side of God the Father in heaven. Jesus resurrection is the **“sign of Jonah”**, the last sign or the last miracle. As Jesus told the crowds, **“This generation is an evil generation”** but God would give them one final and all proving sign that they might know Jesus

is the Christ the only begotten Son of God the Father. Jesus says because God is a God of grace, in verse 30, “**For as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be to this generation.**” God will show grace and mercy to mankind by having his Son to pay the price for the sins of mankind. This final sign from God defines whether a person believes in Jesus as their Lord and Savior and this sign determines, for all generations, where one will spend their eternal life after this earthly mortal life ends. History shows that because people are separated from God by their sins; for many their eyes will not see, their ears will not hear and their souls will remain spiritually dead. It is a miracle that Jesus rose and it is a miracle when God regenerates a person’s dead soul and gives them spiritual life and then he further fills their souls with himself as the Holy Spirit to empower one to overcome the evil of this world. My beloved you are a miracle of God’s grace.
Sola Gratia!

Gentile Judges

Jesus says there will be 2 witnesses that will judge the “**evil and adulterous generations**” of Israel and for all nations before the final judgement. Listen to verses 31 and 32, “**The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.** ³² **The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.**” There is nothing greater than God and God the Son was before them and they should have fallen to their knees and repented and worshipped Jesus. Salvation comes through Jesus alone or **Solus Christus**.

It is interesting that God has all through the history of Israel, the chosen people of God, brought them into correction through foreigners or gentiles and invaders or heroes. God wove into the Jewish history of salvation outsiders and gentiles, and yet, Israel because of its arrogant pride looked down on all gentiles and believed God condemned them. Caleb is the great hero of Judah found in Numbers 32 and he is a Kenizzite. “[Shamgar the son of Anath, who killed 600 of the Philistines with an oxgoad, and he also saved Israel.](#)” (Judges 3:31) He was a gentile who saved Israel. Ruth the Moabite is the great grandmother of King David and in the lineage of Jesus; a gentile. The Queen of Sheba, whose name was *Makueda*, sought out King Solomon because of his wisdom and the God of the Jews who Solomon received his wisdom from and she was a gentile. Historical accounts tell us Solomon and *Makueda* had a son, Menelik, who was the first emperor of Ethiopia in the 10th century BC and responsible for many Ethiopian people coming to believe in Yahweh. These are a just a few of the gentiles God used to correct the Jewish people, yet most remained lost.

The “[queen of South](#)” the first judge in Luke’s passage refers to *Makueka* the Queen of Sheba, a gentile convert, and not a Hebrew, she will judge Israel by the wisdom she gained from King Solomon. Israel is judged by a gentile. Yet, the Jews have before them the One, Jesus Christ, who created the universe and has the authority to judge all creation. Because they have ears that do not hear and eyes that do not see, they do not understand Jesus’ mission is to bring the people back to God so they will not be judged by a gentile, let alone the God, the Creator. However, because of their hard hearts they rejected God’s only begotten Son and they will be judged.

Jonah the reluctant messenger of God is the second judge. The evil gentile Ninevites heard the preaching of Jonah and immediately believed. God opened

their ears so they could be spiritually filled and repent. They put on sack cloth and ashes and repented very quickly when Jonah told them they were going to be destroyed because of their wickedness. Yet, these Israelites will not hear the Son of God sent from heaven and will not repent. So, they will be judged and they will be destroyed to eternal damnation.

Jesus' judgment and verdict is final for all who refuse to repent before the Holy God and believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

God's Light

Jesus now uses a metaphor to again try to help people see their need for a Savior. Read with me from Luke chapter 11 beginning at verse 33, “No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. ³⁴ Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. ³⁵ Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness. ³⁶ If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light.”

The wicked and adulterous generation Jesus is referring to, saw more signs and wonders than any other people who ever existed in history. Yet their eyes were not healthy. Jesus uses a metaphor of people with diseased eyes. He says, there is light, the Light of God, being shown but their eyes cannot see it because either they are blind or diseased. Because of their spiritual blindness, they are missing the Light of the World who is standing right in their midst. Jesus is the Light that can forgive their sins and reconcile them back to God the Father.

Jesus warns us that we must be careful when we see the light of salvation and truth. One needs to let the light into their very soul. To turn a blind eye to the truth is to allow darkness to fill your soul.

Our response must be like the “**queen of the South**” who made the trip and took the time to hear and see for herself, Solomon’s God-given wisdom. She immediately believed and responded by faith. We must be like the Ninevites who heard the preaching of Jonah and very quickly repented and turned to God and away from their sin. We must be people who when we read the account of Jesus in the Gospels believe every word and respond by faith.

When we read of the sign of Jonah and the resurrection of our Lord we should melt with love for our Savior and give Him all the glory by surrendering our lives to His Lordship. Are we a people who very quickly believe or are we always wanting God to prove things to us? Are we followers based on the truths found in Scripture or are we always looking for some other sign or new revelation? Many churches have gone the way of Israel; making man-made rules and laws believing somehow, they can earn salvation. They think the scriptures can be adjusted by man to meet society’s sinful desires. May this never be said of those here, and those of our community, we call Canyon Bible! My beloved, may our lives be marked by our living for the glory of God before a dark world. This is what is known as - **Soli Deo Gloria!**

I pray our eyes and ears are healthy. When we read and hear the truth of the Gospel, I pray we respond by faith. May we hold fast to the basic tenants of the Protestant Reformation. The word Protestant comes from protest – people of God who had ears that heard and eyes that let the Light of God into their hearts protested the corruption that the Roman Catholic Church had become. They

developed 5 core beliefs of what it meant to believe in the one and only true God; they are called the Five Solas or 5 Latin phrases. You will find a copy of the Five Solas and Core Beliefs we adhere to on the back table. Let me put them up on the screen.

Five Solas

Sola Gratia (*Grace Alone*) Salvation is the free gift of God to man. It is given by God's Grace alone and not through any merit on the part of the Christian. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

GRACE = God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

Sola Fide (*Faith Alone*) We are judged righteous in the sight of God purely on the basis of our faith. The atoning sacrifice of Christ leads to righteousness being imputed to us as sinners through a legal declaration by God. (Galatians 3:11)

FAITH = Forsaking All - I Trust Him.

Solus Christus (*Christ Alone*) Christ is the one Mediator between God and man and our salvation is accomplished only through His death and resurrection. (1 Timothy 2:5)

Sola Scriptura (*Scripture Alone*) Scripture alone is the only infallible source of divine revelation and the final authority for matters of faith and practice. *Sola Scriptura* does not mean that all truth is contained in the Bible (for example the Nicene Creed is widely accepted and recited within orthodox Christianity), but rather that all mankind needs to know for salvation is contained within its pages. Everything else we learn about God and his world, and all other authorities, should be interpreted in light of Scripture. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Soli Deo Gloria (*To the glory of God Alone*) Every aspect of the Christian life is to be seen as giving glory to God. In essence, this summarizes the other four *Soli* above. (1 Peter 4:11)

My beloved, these should be the prime directives of our lives; they are simple and straightforward, but it takes effort to live them. Consistent time in prayer and reading and meditating on the Word of God to reprogram our minds and hearts to desire the things of God instead of the world. As God said to Moses, my beloved, as you go about living life, may ²⁴“The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.” (Numbers 6:24-26)