

The Word Saves (7/17/22; Dr. Baines, Jr.)

Read: John 12:44-50

Summary Highlights: In vss. 44-46 Jesus declares that whoever believes in Him believes in the One who sent Him (i.e., God the Father). Whoever sees Him sees the One who sent Him. Jesus declares that He is the light that allows His people to avoid living in darkness.

In vss. 47- 50 Jesus declares that those who reject Him will not be judged by Him, right now. Jesus came to save, not judge at this time. But there will be a judgment for those who reject Him. Jesus declares that He has only spoken what the Father gave Him to say.

Introduction: A key idea in today's lesson is that Jesus came to be the light and judgment is coming for those who reject Him. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to walk in the light of God's will and urge others to do the same.

Applications:

1. God's representative. Notice in vss. 44-45 that Jesus was and is the pure representation of the Father. As in the text, we should do the best representation of the Father that we can be. We do this by living obedient lives and giving all of the glory to God. Think about how there are biblical principles for every area of our lives. *Let's work on being great representatives of God.*

2. Living in the light. Notice in vs. 26 that living by God's will is living in the light, instead of in the darkness. As disciples of Christ, we can and should prayerfully study and obey God's word as our means of living in the light of God's will. A failure to do so is to remain in the darkness of this world. We should encourage one another to be faithful in prayerful study and obedience. *Let's work on living in the light of God's word.* At the core of God's word are the issues of accepting Jesus as our savior by faith and living our lives with high priority given to loving God and others as we love ourselves.

3. Our assignments. Notice in vs. 47 that Jesus understood and stay focused on His assignment of saving, not judging (at this time). As in the text, we should seek to understand and perform our assignments. We can find our assignments by seeking to live by biblical principles in every area of our lives. We should seek intersections of needs that need to be met, our abilities to help, and our willingness to help. A coordinated team can accomplish so much. But when everyone is simply doing whatever they want, chaos is normally nearby. *Let's work on understanding and carrying out our assignments.* Think about how this application relates to your personal stewardship, family and friend duties, church and community duties, and your job or business.

4. Judgement. Notice in vs. 48 that even though Jesus did not come to judge (this time), there is still a judgement that awaits those who reject Him. As in the text, there is a

judgment that awaits those who reject the teachings of Jesus. As disciples, we should do what we can to help people understand and obey God's word. There are great blessings that come with obedience. And there is punishment that comes with not obeying God's word. Just like there is a Heaven and eternal life, there is a Hell and eternal torment. We should not confuse God's longsuffering compassion with His no longer being a just judge. *Let's live like we believe that judgment is coming.* This kind of living should include our helping others get right before judgment comes. Furthermore, believers don't have to worry about the Great White Throne Judgement (see Rev. 20:11-15), but we should strive to have gold at the Judgement Seat of Christ (see I Cor. 3:10-15).

5. Salvation. Notice in vs. 50 that there is eternal life for those who align with God's will. We should read this to mean that we are called to accept Christ as our savior by faith. This means that we have asked and are trusting God to have forgiven us of our sins, so that we are now in right relationship with Him. Telling evidence of our genuine faith (as opposed to simply saying the right words) is our striving to understand and obey God's word. None of us are dotting all of the I's or crossing all of the T's. However, we should be convicted to strive to keep moving forward in our understanding and obeying God's will. *Let's make sure that we are really saved.*