

January 22, 2023

Week 3 | January 22, 2023, | **John 12:36-50**

Sermon: *The King's Word and its Power to Transform*

Themes: The power of belief and the reward of believing totally in Christ.

Focus: True belief results in keeping the King's Word and, in the end, eternal life; unbelief results in judgment

Scripture Memorization: John 12:45. ⁴⁵The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me.

This week's Prayer: This week's prayer focus is that we would work to overcome obstacles that keep us from areas of "unbelief]

Monday: Read John 12:36-38. **Devotional Task:** What does it take to "believe?" This passage explains the benefit of believing in Christ [the light]. Belief is evident by our commitment and action; to claim that you believe but there is no evidence, then it's more likely that you want to believe, but true belief has not been established. In order to believe, we must overcome our "unbelieve." In other words, for everything you believe, there is something you must "unbelieve. In order to believe that God is right, I have to undo my belief in everything that contradicts what he says [unbelieve what I am holding on to]. What is a belief that you had and had to 'unbelieve' in order to fully accept God? What do you need to "unbelieve' right now to be more committed to God?

Tuesday: Read John 12:30-41. **Group or Devotional Task:** Here, Jesus refers to a passage in Isaiah stating that some people need to face pain in order to experience the promise. There is a saying that goes, "a hard head makes a soft behind." Meaning, if you won't learn by listening, you will learn by consequences. Please consider the following.

1. Share a time when you had to learn from a negative experience because you didn't listen to advice or guidance.
2. What is it like to watch a loved one doing something that will cause them harm, knowing that if they would listen to you, they could avoid the pain?
3. Believing God will almost always mean that there is something you must reject. [Believing in forgiveness means I have to "unbelieve" or dismantle my belief in revenge. Share a belief you are holding on to that keeps you from deepening your belief in God's ways.
4. The passage makes it clear that God will stop trying to get you to believe so that you might learn through the consequences of your unbelief. Share something that you have had to learn as a result of consequences.

Wednesday: Read John 12:42-43. **Devotional Task:** Jesus raised another issue regarding beliefs; he says some do believe but hide their belief because of their desire to please others. Since the synagogue was the hub of fellowship among the Jewish community, some valued pleasing them more than they valued pleasing God. There are things like, saying grace at a public restaurant, sharing your trust in Christ in a mixed crowd, not cussing, rejecting some jokes, etc., that are often done by those we choose to fit in with others at the expense of pleasing God. Name three things that people do to please others at the expense of pleasing God. Which one of the three is closest to something you have done?

Thursday: Read John 12:44 – 46. **Devotional Task:** Notice that the longer you stay in darkness, the more it becomes normalized and comfortable. In our walk with Christ, we might not be in total darkness, but most of us have "dark spots" in our lives. These areas are places where because of how we manage our free will, God does not have access to. What area of your life would be considered a "dark spot?" What would it take to allow Christ in that area?

Friday: Read John 12:47-50. **Devotional Task:** Christ said he has not come to judge but rather to save us from the existing judgment. Like those who were on the Titanic, humanity is in a sinking ship. Christ offers a life raft that will take us into eternal life with the Father. Those who love the beauty of the ship so much that they reject the rescue raft, have actually chosen their demise. Who do you see sinking as you look around you [family, work, school, friends, etc.]? What could you do are say to them to help them see the light? Are you willing to try?

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