

## **Life and Judgment**

HN/SS 19/09/04 am

Reading: Isaiah 42:1-9, Acts 17

Study: John 5:20-23

Psalms: 72:1-7, 9:7-11, 76:7-12, 72:17-19

In India, it is quite amazing to see the efforts that parents go to get their child into medical school. They will pay for hours of tuition and massive bribes if that will help. In the agricultural university where we worked many of the students said they were there because they failed to get into medicine.

In addition, it is not so different here is it. What are the two courses most difficult to get into – medicine and law? It seems most people want to be healing people, or making judgments for them – overlooking the fact that many just want to make lots of money! We marvel at the work doctors do, and respect the power wielded by lawyers and judges.

Jesus is the ultimate healer and indeed gives life to the dead. Jesus is the ultimate judge. He is the one before whom all men will have to give account.

The Jews charged Jesus with making himself equal with God when he called God *My Father*. They would have even more reason to charge him when they heard what Jesus had to say. He answered that indeed he did only what the Father does and that the Father loves him and shows him all things he does. Then Jesus said that they would see greater works than this- they would see greater works than the healing of a cripple man.

These marvellous works are pointed out in the following verses that we will look at today. The Jews knew that God was all-powerful and that he could raise the dead. The creator God made man and breathed into him the breath of life. Only God can give life.

They also knew God as the great judge. *Shall not the judge of all the earth do right* said Abraham. These men loved Abraham. They knew about the judgment day. Only God has the right to judge. But see what Jesus claims in these verses.

### **Life**

What is life? The medical doctor's work is to preserve life but he cannot give life. We give blood to save someone's life but will new blood bring life to a dead person. The scientist can mix a few chemicals, zap it with electricity, and get some new chemicals. These may be just like the chemicals we are made of, but is this life? The evolutionist who denies a creator God is hard put to explain just how life began, for even our most intelligent scientists cannot give life.

Without God, there would be no life. God breathed into man whom he created. He breathed into him the breath of life. And that same omnipotent God can raise the dead. And Jesus, God the Son can do the same. *As the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the son gives life to whom he will.*

Jesus would not only heal the cripple and give sight to the blind but he would raise the dead. Lazarus

had been dead for 4 days when Jesus called him to come out of the tomb. LAZARUS, COME FORTH! He prayed to his Father so that the people would know he was doing this great work together with God the Father. Jesus has the power to give life – he gives life to whom he will.

In the prologue we read that *in him*, the Word or Jesus, was life. Jesus said *I am the way the truth and the life*. Jesus is life, the source and the giver of life. *He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son does not have life* (I John 5:12)

Does this life refer only to physical life? It refers to physical life for sure because Lazarus came out of the grave. But more importantly the life Jesus gives is spiritual life. It is eternal life. *God has given us eternal life and that life is in his son* (I John 5:11). He raises those who are dead in their sin unto new life. He gives life to the soul that is dead. And He gives that life now. He who believes has eternal life (5:24). Not 'will have' but 'has' now. They have passed from death to life.

We cannot comprehend the great, the supernatural, power that it takes to raise a body from the dead. No man has ever done it – except Jesus. Yet how much greater power is required to raise dead hearts, dead souls and to give life, eternal life to those whom he will. No man has done it – except Jesus.

The *exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe* is how Paul describes it in Ephesians 1:19. God worked in a mighty way to bring our hearts alive to the truth- to the way, the truth, and life that are found only in Jesus Christ.

### **Judgment**

The Jews knew God as the giver of life and also as the judge of all the earth. It was the exclusive prerogative of God to judge men. Who else knows the hearts of men? Therefore, it must have come as a shock to hear Jesus declare that *all judgment has been committed to the Son*. Jesus was giving them more ammunition with which to charge him with blasphemy, with making himself equal with God.

But Jesus did not hold back. He declared the truth. He declares that the Father in fact judges no one. He has committed all judgment to the Son. It will be Jesus judging all men on the Last day. God has appointed a day and he has ordained the man by whom he will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:31).

The Jews were ready to judge Jesus for breaking the Sabbath. They wanted to put him to death for breaking the law. Eventually they did judge him and did put him to death on the cross. But ultimately, on the last day, it will be Jesus who will be judging them and all men. 'There seems a fitness in this' writes Ryle. 'He who was condemned by an unjust judgment, and died for sinners, is he whose office it will be to judge the world'.

Jesus knows the hearts of all men. He came into this world as a man, was tempted in every way as we are. He suffered more than we will ever suffer. Therefore, when men bring all their excuses on judgment day, when they claim terrible temptation or testing, when they claim terrible suffering or just simple ignorance, Jesus will say 'what's new'. 'Been there, know that, but I overcame- and you could have overcome also if you have believed in me'. He will understand and he will judge with justice and righteousness.

The judgment Jesus spoke of that had been committed to him by his Father is not just at the end of the age. His is already judge and he is already judging. *For judgment I have come into this world he said, that those who do not see may see and those who see may be made blind* (John 9:39). He was talking about the here and now. He was talking to the Pharisees who were rejecting Jesus. *We know that God spoke to Moses they said but as for this fellow we do not know where he is from* (9:29).

### **Conclusion**

The Jews claimed they were honouring God in their zeal for the law. They were very upright men, leaders among the people. They were outwardly very religious. They were quick off the mark in finding Jesus and charging him with blasphemy. They did all this to honour God.

But the tragic thing was that they were doing just the opposite. They were dishonouring God. They were bringing themselves under the wrath of God.

*For he who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent him.* Father and Son are on about the same thing. They have one purpose, and they share all things in a deep bond of love. You cannot honour one and not the other.

We might think of a husband and wife even though such love and intimacy is but a poor reflection of that in the Godhead. Yet even in a marriage, we dare not say to the husband 'I think your great but I can't stand your wife'. I know a couple where this was thought but to come between the two would be disastrous – and rightly so. You cannot have one without the other.

'There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory'. With love comes jealousy – a righteous jealousy. To speak against or to ignore one person in the Trinity will stir up jealousy and divine wrath.

Let us not fall into the error of the Jews, or of some churchgoers today in failing to worship God the Son. Thomas called him '*My Lord and my God*'. Jesus said *I and the Father are one* (10:30). And again *I am in the Father and the Father in me* (14:10). Jesus accepted worship and is being worshipped now as the lamb upon the throne in heaven.

Do you honour him; do you worship him as the one who gives you life? Do you honour him; do you worship him as your judge, the judge of all the earth?

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