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Go and make disciples!

E-votional 96

Hearing is Believing

John 8:45-47 (ESV)

But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.”

The context of this passage is worth taking note of first. You see Jesus was sent to His own people, people He created at that, and still they, for the most part, did not receive Him (John 1:9-13). Yet if one did receive Him they also received power (exousia) to become children of God.

In John 8, the Jews repeatedly would make claims that since they were a direct descendant of Abraham and that they had the Law of Moses that they were children of the Father already. But Jesus kept appealing to their sinful state as human beings instead. In this particular context and in this exact case Jesus was telling them that if they continued in His word that they would know the truth and be set free. To this, the Jews made the claim that they are already free and have never been a slave to anyone because they were offspring of Abraham (John 8:31-38).

From here Jesus told them that if they were children of Abraham that they would also be doing works like Abraham and then He said, “but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did.” (John 8:39-40)

Indeed Abraham, when he heard what God said to Him followed suit, unlike these religious people of Jesus’s day. They claimed to be of God but showed hatred towards Him in all that they did and said. In fact, they sought to kill God by claiming they were doing service for God. Let that sink in for a minute.

So there is the context, lets continue now to our chosen passage of Scripture,

namely verse 47,

“Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.”

Wow! These are bold words from our Lord Jesus that strike right to the very heart of the issue with these people. In short, one who can hear what God is saying is of God and the one who cannot hear what God is saying is not. Jesus really paints a clear picture sometimes of those who are His and those who are not. I wonder if we also can take these words to heart and develop a keen sense of being able to hear accurately the voice of God. Honestly, Scripture teaches in many places that we are set apart by being born again and indwelt with the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that confirms the written words and speaks it within us and also guides and teaches us in all truth. Let me be clear here, the Jews believed they had all they needed in the written Law of Moses so when Jesus spoke they rejected it. However, the very written word that they had was literally spoken by men of God through the Holy Spirit. So it is then that the Jews had the written inspiration of God through the prophets that spoke about the Christ and yet still they rejected Him.

I am building into something here and want to be very clear with a real doctrine that has invaded many church bodies. It is a doctrine that says that God does not still speak today. They further say that all they need is the written word of God and that anyone who believes they can actively and presently hear God's voice is wrong and a false teacher. I want to be very clear as a shepherd of the flock of God in whatever ways God uses me that this doctrine itself is false teaching. They go even further and make claims that there is no more use of many of the supernatural gifts of the Spirit since they have the written word. What is interesting about their false claims is that by saying things like this they actually cut themselves off from hearing from God. It makes me look at what Jesus said, *“Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.”*

People of God let me be very clear again. God speaks today just as much as at any other time in history. It is up to us to desire to listen and ask Him for understanding. And if for some reason you cannot hear God right now. Do not be ashamed, this might just be a stepping stone for greater glories in your relationship with the Lord. Ask Him to reveal His active voice to you now, do not waste any time. Jesus said that His sheep hear His voice. If we only had the written word and not His voice to interpret it we would be utterly lost.

For reference, we must be patient when awaiting an answer from the Lord, for He does not speak just because we want Him to, He always has a purpose and

a time that is according to His will. Praying according to His will and desires is paramount when desiring to hear His voice. If I am always asking for things that are according to my own desires then the Lord has no obligation to speak or respond.

Let us as the body of Christ grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in this way and so prove to be His disciples. Let us not be like the religious people of the Lord's day who could not hear or receive what He had to say to them. Remember a distinguishing mark of a follower of Jesus Christ is that they can hear and receive instruction from God by the Holy Spirit.

The Lord bless you and keep you in Jesus name.

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In Christ's Love,
Chris and Jeanne
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