

Here's Your Sign

Good morning church!!!

I have a public service announcement to start things off this morning.

We like to try a lot of new things if you hadn't noticed.

Sometimes they are great things, sometimes they are flops, sometimes they are our ideas, more often they are God's

Not the worship and sermons those are God's (at least they better be). 😊

We do things like:

Having the kids come up, or having them answer questions

Prayer requests and praise reports like last week

Announcements before or after worship

Alternating teaching pastors

More worship and prayer

Rotating pastors for announcements, communion, sermons

More potlucks

Business meetings

And so on...

The fact is we want nothing more than to serve our God and serve His people (YOU) but WE, and I know that this may come as a surprise **can't read minds** and don't always know what is bringing you closer to God and what may be a distraction.

Now there are a few non negotiables (10 as a matter of fact) that we have as a church.

1. We will teach the Word of God the way that it is written in the Bible with fact and truth.
2. We will promote Family amongst this congregation
3. We will Do our best to teach and model LOVE for God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit and for EACH OTHER.
4. We will be accepting of all of God's people. Rich or poor, clean or dirty, young or old, believer or non believer.
5. The younger generation will not be pushed to the side they are a priority.
6. We will maintain that you are saved by grace through faith alone PERIOD
7. We are the Fathers children and once we accept Him and repent IT IS FINAL you cannot lose your salvation
8. Worship, prayer, and communion will also be a priority.
9. We will promote a helpful, serving, and loving church not only to each other but also to the community and further.
10. No leader or pastor is to be "worshiped" or held above anyone else. We are all part of one body.

Now with that being said, WE ASK, IMPLORE, DESIRE your feedback to help us.

All of this leadership team have been in church for many years and have seen things work and things that didn't work quite as well.

We don't have all of the answers and we all don't have all of the experience but we also believe that we were called to be here to serve, to be shepherds.

We are doing something new as of today!

We have a comment box on the back table along with comment cards for you to fill out. You can leave your name or write it anonymously. Either way.

We ask you to please be constructive and kind. DON'T BE HURTFULL.

Not all of your requests will be put in place. But if there are multiple requests of the same type they will be prayed on and considered between us as a team.

We will always do our best to make everyone happy but sometimes that is easier said than done.

WOULD YOU PLEASE HELP US!!!

There is no reason that anyone should leave this church over a grievance without first letting us know how to make it better.

Thank you

Lets get into Gods word shall we?

Who brought your Bibles today?

This week I'm going to talk to you a lot about FAITH and next week I'm going to talk to you a lot about JOY.

Can you have Joy without Faith? No

Were going to study Matthew 12:38-42 today

But before we do we need a recap.

Lets go back to the beginning of Chapter 12.

For a lot of this chapter we've been dealing with or shall I say Jesus has been dealing with the stinking pharisees.

Can everybody say it with me stinking Pharisees.

If we remember we started off chapter 12 with the Sabbath and in verse 2 the Word says ²Now when the Pharisees saw *this*, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on a Sabbath!"

Still in chapter 12 we cruise down to verse 22 and we were talking about the demon possessed man who was blind and unable to speak and then Jesus healed him and what did the Pharisees say in [verse 24](#)

[24 But when the Pharisees heard *this*, they said, “This man casts out demons only by ^{\[z\]}Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.”](#)

Each time the Pharisees interrupt, Jesus is teaching, He's performing a miracle or He is preaching the Word of God.

We've talked a lot lately about knowing the word of God and not living out the word of God in daily life.

Jesus has made many points that if you know the word of God then you should know better than to act in defiance of what the Bible tells us to act like and be like. The Pharisees were the epitome of what He is teaching us not to be.

Most of the time when I am writing a sermon or I am getting ready to teach something the Lord gives me some sort of experience or some sort of story that helps bring the scripture to life into an application so that I can relay that to you.

Normally they are fun stories or sweet stories or something along those lines that I get to have the privilege of putting it all together and smiling or having a good or warm fuzzy feeling about.

This last several weeks He Has given me a real life application story and experience that has been less than pleasurable.

We've been talking a lot about this concept of a person that knows the word of God inside and out but uses it as a weapon that causes division and factions.

This person that I have been dealing with claims to be a powerful and knowledgeable Christian, but continues to belittle, divide, gossip, and slander me and this leadership team.

The crazy thing is he only uses part of the scripture to defend his points. Now I am not comparing myself in any way to Jesus and to the problem that He was dealing with with the Pharisees. What I am dealing with is nowhere near what He had to deal with, However, I feel like He's given me a small taste test and bringing the scripture that we've been studying alive.

I'll be the first one to try to show love and grace to everyone, many times I fail at this, but I try very hard to be the man that God wants me to be.

However, in the last few weeks I've had a rebuke the pharisee moment. I'm not talking about Steve by the way.

I'm sure that I could have done better with the intricacies of how I handled it, but All in all it could have been much worse. I didn't say anything completely out of line but let me just say it this way I spoke was with a lot of passion which is defined by me as less than yelling but more than talking. That is something that I asked for forgiveness for this week.

However, I do believe, that there is a time and a place to rebuke the Pharisees of today's day and age. We should always show love, grace, and gentleness (the gentleness is where I could have used a little more caution) but we are also charged with standing up for the truth of God's word and handling it with care and only using it as a weapon against the devil and his schemes.

Isn't it amazing how the words, stories, parables, and teaching that were written thousands of years ago still teach, inspire, and guide us today in our daily lives. It's almost like God had a plan huh?

Lets turn to Matthew 12:38-42 We are going to break this down today and really understand what Jesus is saying in these few verses.

Matthew 12:38-42

³⁸Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.” ³⁹But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation craves a sign; and so no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet; ⁴⁰for just as Jonah was in the stomach of the sea monster for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. ⁴¹The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, *something* greater than Jonah is here. ⁴²*The Queen of the South* will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, *something* greater than Solomon is here.

That’s a whole lot of information there, so let’s just take one bite at a time.

Lets start with verses 38 and 39

³⁸Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.” ³⁹But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation craves a sign; and so no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet;

So is it wrong to ask God for a sign? Is that what Jesus is saying here because if we look back a ways into the Old Testament we will see God giving signs to people who ask Him for them.

In judges 6 Gideon had already been given instruction from the Lord, and had been equipped and reassured by God that he was going to save Israel through Him. But Gideon still asked for a sign and God gave him one.

Judges 6: 36-38a.

³⁶Then Gideon said to God, “If You are going to save Israel through me, as You have spoken, ³⁷behold, I am putting a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I will know that You will save Israel through me, as You have spoken.” ³⁸And it was so...

When Abraham father of many nations, and friend of God asked God for a sign He also gave it to him.

Genesis 15: 7-9

⁷And He said to him, “I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it.” ⁸But he said, “Lord God, how may I know that I will possess it?” ⁹So He said to him, “Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.”

God provided many signs too many people Throughout the Bible.

To Gideon he was afraid and God reassured him.

To Abraham how will I know? And God showed him

To Moses how do I prove it to them? And God gave a sign

To Elijah show these people that you are God. God sent fire

To Thomas if I see the holes in His hands and feet. Jesus showed him.

But here's the problem.

The pharisees said prove it even though they'd already seen Him teach, preach, and heal. Even though He fit every evidence of being the Messiah, even though they had studied God's word from an early age, even though they should have known better.

That's why Jesus rebuked them.

Let's look at versus 40-42

⁴⁰for just as Jonah was in the stomach of the sea monster for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. ⁴¹The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, *something* greater than Jonah is here.

Jesus says I'm not going to give you a sign but my Father is going to give you a sign. Through My death and resurrection.

Then He tries to make it make sense to them by telling them about Jonah and the similarities of what happened with him to compare it to what's going to happen with Jesus.

Jesus was pointing them towards His resurrection.

So why did Jesus not just end at verse 40 why did He continue on with verse 41 when He says the men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah and behold something greater than Jonah was here.

Nineveh responded to a preacher that brought the word of God but Jonah also had a lot of flaws as we all know. Then Nineveh accepted God's message.

Jesus was preaching, teaching, and healing. Jesus was casting out demons, Forgiving people, loving, And bringing the Kingdom of God.

And the Pharisees rejected, scoffed at, and mocked it.

But something greater than Jonah was there Wasn't it? Jesus

Death didn't hold Jesus did it?

Acts 2:23-24

²³this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death. ²⁴**But God raised Him *from the dead*, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.**

AMEN

Lets look at verse 42

⁴² *The Queen of the South* will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, *something* greater than Solomon is here.

Who is Jesus talking about? The queen of Sheba.

The queen of Sheba was from the southern parts of Arabia and that's why He calls her the queen of the South.

Jesus is making a point here again to the Pharisees the queen of Sheba traveled all the way to Solomon and asked him many many questions to see if the things that she had heard about Solomon were true.

1Kings 10:7-9

⁷ But I did not believe the stories until I came and my *own* eyes saw *it all*. And behold, the half *of it* was not reported to me. You have exceeded *in* wisdom and prosperity the report which I heard. ⁸ Blessed are your men, *and* blessed are these servants of yours who stand before you continually *and* hear your wisdom! ⁹ Blessed be the Lord your God who delighted in you to put you on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loves Israel forever, He made you king, to do justice and righteousness.”

Jesus references the queen of Sheba that she came by the word of others to see the splendor and wisdom of Solomon. She saw and she believed.

The Pharisees witnessed, heard, and saw with their own eyes and still did not believe. And what they saw was much more than Solomon, they saw the Messiah.

I think that it's interesting how there are many places in the Bible that talk about faith, love, grace, and forgiveness. Jesus talks about them over and over and over. It's almost like it's important and that we need to take note of how important it is.

Jesus has many stories to tell and many teachings to impart on us throughout chapter 12, but over and over again he continues to warn the Pharisees.

It seems as though Jesus doesn't like bullies. And that He continues to say you should know better.

Now if you remember I said that we were gonna talk about faith today. What is faith?

As the Bible says faith is not seeing yet believing, but the difference is **is we do believe** and the **Pharisees did not**.

Hebrews 11:1-3

11 Now faith is *the* certainty of *things* hoped for, a proof of things not seen. ²For by it the people of old gained approval.

³By faith we understand that the world has been created by the word of God so that what is seen has not been made out of things that are visible.

How does faith come into play when we've been talking about how Jesus has been rebuking the Pharisees?

Because as I explained earlier asking for a sign and it doesn't have to be an actual visual sign is not always wrong.

There have been many times in my life that I have asked God To give me a sign, or to show me something, or to open a door or for that matter to close the door.

That doesn't mean you have a lack of faith. God helps us in our weaknesses and there's sometimes that our weaknesses need some encouragement and we are so blessed that God gives us that encouragement.

The difference is we're asking for help, we're asking for a sign. Where the Pharisees had it wrong is, they were demanding proof, they didn't already believe, they were testing God.

Having doubts doesn't mean that you don't have faith, I always feel kind of bad when the Bible says that you have to have faith of a mustard seed to be able to move mountains. I don't know about you but I've never moved a mountain. That doesn't mean that I don't have faith.

Faith is not something that we have on our own it's not something that we by ourselves can build. Faith is something that God gives us.

Now is that necessarily something that God just gives us without us doing any work? No

Faith is one of those things that God builds in US. And sometimes he builds that faith through trials and tribulations. Sometimes he teaches us perseverance and that builds our faith.

God has a perfect design, and he has a perfect design for your life. Now if we follow that perfect design that kind of depends on us.

My sweet wife likes to say it like this.

That we make choices in our lives that can shape our story and that there's three choices as a believer, that God already has our life planned out.

But we choose a good, better, or best path to get to where He wants us to go.

One of the main keys to getting on the best path is trusting in Him.

Proverbs 3:5-6

⁵Trust in the Lord with all your heart
And do not lean on your own understanding.

⁶In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He will make your paths straight

Weve been given enough to know that He is going to work it all out for good, but we don't have to know how.

We don't have to know how, we just have to know who.

Romans 8:28

²⁸And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

Pray