

26. Jesus Was Opposed by the Pharisees

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that as long as people lack faith, they may not believe that Jesus is the Christ. Ephesians 2:8 says that faith is the gift of God when that verse says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God.” Faith to believe is given to people by the Father as a part of the fact that He is drawing them to Jesus. Our part is to share the Word of God because Romans 10:17 says, “So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” In our topic today, we will see that the Pharisees became stronger in their opposition to Jesus.

In John 7:28-31, we read, “Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, ‘You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.’ Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. And many of the people believed in Him, and said, ‘When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this *Man* has done?’” Here, we see that Jesus spoke loudly so that a larger number of people could hear Him.

Some of the people in the temple, that day had known Jesus since He was a child. They knew that He had grown up in the city of Nazareth. They understood about His physical life on the earth. Their problem was due to the fact that they did not know and understand that Jesus had come from the Father and had been conceived by the Holy Spirit. The angel told Mary in Luke 1:35, “And the angel answered and said to her, ‘*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.*’” Jesus would say the next day in John 8:19, “Then they said to Him, ‘Where is Your Father?’ Jesus answered, ‘You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.’” That was why they could not understand what Jesus said.

After mentioning His physical life and background, Jesus went on to say that He did not come of Himself. Jesus said that the One who sent Him is true but that the people did not know the One who sent Him. In this statement, Jesus was talking about the fact that the One who sent Him was God, the Father. That is why Jesus could say that He knew Him and had come from Him. In fact, it was God, the Father, who had sent Him. The Jews recognized that He was talking about God but they could not understand how He could be from God because some of them had known Him as He grew up. Here, we see again why 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, “But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.” Without spiritual understanding, it was impossible for the Jews to recognize that Jesus was the Messiah who had come from the Father. As a result, they wanted to arrest Him but could not because the hour for Him to die had not yet come.

The religious leaders rejected Jesus. We see a different reaction by many of the people that had seen the signs Jesus had performed. They asked if the Christ would be able to do more signs than Jesus had done. These people recognized that Jesus must come from God in order to be able to do these signs. We see the response of the Pharisees in John 7:32-36, which say, “The Pharisees

heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. Then Jesus said to them, ‘I shall be with you a little while longer, and *then* I go to Him who sent Me. You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.’ Then the Jews said among themselves, ‘Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? What is this thing that He said, “You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come”?’” The Pharisees and chief priests were upset and sent officers to arrest Jesus.

These officers were Levites who were responsible to maintain order in the temple and carry out the other assignments that the religious leaders gave them so that was why they were sent to arrest Jesus. Meanwhile, Jesus continued to talk to the people. Jesus said that He would only be there for a little longer and then He would go to the One who had sent Him. As we look back to that time, we can understand that Jesus was talking about the fact that He would return to heaven after the resurrection. In contrast, none of the people in that day could understand what Jesus meant. Jesus said that the Jews would look for Him and would not be able to find Him. Jesus said that where He was going the people would not be able to follow. This caused further confusion among the people.

The people wondered where Jesus planned to go. The word translated “Dispersion” meant *the Jews who were scattered in other nations among the Gentiles*. As a result, we see that the Jews had no understanding of what Jesus meant. It was the plan of Jesus to reach out to the Jews that were scattered and also to the Gentiles. Acts 1:8 says, ““But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”” This verse shows that it was the plan of Jesus to reach to every people group on the earth. However, that plan would be carried out through His disciples and all who have become true followers of Jesus. In fact, we are each called to share the news of Jesus and His death and resurrection with the people with whom we have contact.

Jesus said, “You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.” Jesus would later explain to His disciples in John 14:1-3, ““Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”” The people would not be able to find Jesus because He would return to the Father. The only way that any person can come to the Father is through Jesus. Jesus went on to say to Thomas in John 14:6, “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”

Jesus continued to teach throughout the rest of the time of the feast. John 7:37-39 says, “On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” Here, we see that Jesus chose to introduce the ministry of the Holy Spirit to the people on the last day of the feast. However, none of those who heard Jesus that day were able to understand what He

meant.

Jesus had told the woman of Samaria in John 4:10, “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, “Give Me a drink,” you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.’” Jesus went on to explain to the Samaritan woman in John 4:13-14, “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.’” Now, we see that Jesus was offering that living water to all who are thirsty. We want to follow the example of Jesus and explain to others the difference between physical thirst and spiritual thirst. Physical thirst will continue to be a need for each person. In contrast, those who have their spiritual thirst satisfied will receive spiritual life that will last forever.

Jesus made a great offer to all those who would come to Him and drink. He said that those who believe in Him are the ones who choose to drink that living water that gives eternal life. Here, we see that Jesus also said that those who come to Him will have a changed heart. In fact, Jesus said that each person who believes in Him will have rivers of living water flowing out of his heart. John explained that this was talking about the fact that each person who believes receives the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:9 says, “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.” Each person that has true faith in Jesus, also has the Holy Spirit in his or her life. Anyone who does not have the Holy Spirit has not yet repented of his or her sin and placed his or her faith in Jesus.

We see that this verse says that each person who has the Holy Spirit will have rivers of living water flowing out of his heart. Romans 8:16 says, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” The Holy Spirit now lives in our human spirit and assures us that we are the children of God. However, having the Holy Spirit in our hearts also gives us boldness to witness about Christ to those who are not yet Christians as we yield to the Holy Spirit. In Acts 4:8, we see that Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then in Acts 4:13, we see the results when that verse says, “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.” Then, Acts 4:31 adds, “And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.”

We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that as they yield to the Holy Spirit, they are filled with the Holy Spirit. We want to show them by our example that the Holy Spirit will give boldness to witness for Christ. He is the one who makes it possible for rivers of living water to flow from our hearts. May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children how to have boldness to witness.