

The Danger of Superficial Faith

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John 8:30-38

Jesus had declared at the Feast of Tabernacles that he was the light of the World (8:12).

- It's a call to DISCIPLESHIP – “If anyone follows me, he will not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

[30] *As he was saying these things, many believed in Him.*

- The SAME people who “believe in him” want to kill him when JESUS confronts their SUPERFICIAL FAITH.

We are FACED with this REALITY of what is called the UNBELIEVING BELIEVER. - A PERSON who professes FAITH in CHRIST, but it is not a GENUINE FAITH.

- There are PEOPLE who believe in HIM for Superficial REASONS.
- John 2:23 – [23] *Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. [24] But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them because he knew all people [25] and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.*
 - Jesus supernaturally knew and understood the hearts of the PEOPLE who had “believed in Him” @ the FIRST PASSOVER.
 - He knew it was NOT a GENUINE FAITH. Therefore, He did not ENTRUST Himself to them.
- Matthew 13:18 – 23. THE HARD TRUTH.
 - Four SOILS.
 - The HARD PATH; The ROCKY SOIL; The THORNY SOIL; The GOOD SOIL
 - The Explanation of it is as follows:
 - Verse 18, 19 – The Hard path are those who outright reject the gospel.
 - Verse 20, 21 – The Rocky soil receives the Word with joy, but falls away.
 - Verse 22 – The thorny soil, chokes out the Word with the cares of the World.
 - Verse 23 – The Good Soil produces fruit.

What JESUS is going to do with these SUPERFICIAL BELIEVERS is he is going to HOLD up the GENUINE ARTICLE of FAITH.

- *He points these JEWS to what AUTHENTIC FAITH looks like and shows them where their FAITH doesn't measure up.*
- He SHOWS us SIX QUALITIES of GENUINE FAITH – and exposes their SUPERFICIAL FAITH.

1) Genuine Faith Dwells in the Word of God

[31] *So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.*

One of the effects of GENUINE FAITH is that there is an ENDURANCE in the WORD of GOD. Whereas Superficial faith does not ENDURE.

- The Word that is used is the GREEK word *Meno* – Conditional subjunctive – This CONDITION is met in the TRUE CHRISTIAN.
 - It means to REMAIN – ABIDE – DWELL.

- John 15:4 – *Abide in me, and I in you...*
- You could say it means to “DWELL as you WOULD in a HOUSE.”
 - *Continuing in the WORD of GOD is one of the EVIDENCES that you are TRULY one of CHRIST’s DISCIPLES.*
- *ENDURING in the WORD is not the GROUND of TRUE FAITH, IT is the EVIDENCE of TRUE FAITH.*
 - 2 John 9 – [9] *Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.*
 - Jesus says to the church @ Philadelphia Revelation 3:8 – [8] *“Yet you have kept my Word and have not denied my name.”*
- It’s the REALITY of STAYING in the WORD of CHRIST. Endurance.
- Two REALITIES:
 - 1) *A Desire to Study the Scriptures*
 - 2) *A Desire to Submit to the Scriptures*

Two Tests:

- 1) *Look at Your Bible. “A Bible which falling apart normally belongs to a Christian who isn’t.”*
- 2) *Look at Your Life. Is there a deep hunger and desire to submit your life to Scripture?*
 - Is Psalm 119:105 true of you – [105] *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

2) **Genuine Faith Knows the Truth**

[32] *and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

- It’s not just any truth that Jesus is talking about.
- He’s talking about the BEDROCK of TRUTH. The very FOUNDATION of TRUTH – Which is the PERSON of CHRIST and the TRUTH of His TEACHING.
 - A. W. Pink – “The truth of truths.”
 - Paul says in Titus 1:1 – *“the truth that accords with godliness”*
- *What would this TRUTH be?*
 - *Reign* – God reigns over the Universe because He created the Universe.
 - *Retribution* – God will judge everyone according to a Righteous Standard.
 - *Ruin* – Man after Adam stands before God condemned because of SIN. We are born sinners and thus we all deserve judgment.
 - *Redemption* - Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He was sent into the world on a MISSION to save sinners. His cross is a substitutionary atonement on our behalf.
 - *Regeneration* – We must be given a new life in Christ. Our old life must end and a new life must begin.
 - *Repentance* - Repentance and faith are necessary to receive the benefits of Christ’s redemption. Repentance is a change of mind about our condition. Faith is coming to Christ as Savior and Lord. Through Faith there is forgiveness of sins.
 - *Return* – The Lord Jesus is returning at the end of history. All believers will be raised and given resurrection bodies.
- *This TRUTH becomes the bedrock worldview of your LIFE.*
 - With SUPERFICIAL FAITH these truths are not believed in the HEART.
 - They are not KNOWN and BELIEVED in the HEART.
- *The TRUE CHRISTIAN internalizes these truths. Whereas Superficial Faith leaves them aside.*

Genuine Faith Dwells in the Word of God; Genuine Faith Knows the Truth.

3) **Genuine Faith Gives Liberty**

[32] *and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*

The LIBERTY that Jesus talks about is the LIBERTY from a LIFE of SIN.

- What Jesus is getting at is Man's situation is that of SLAVERY – That we are on bondage to sin and need freedom. And the TRUTH brings that freedom.

[33] *They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"*

- Of course Israel had been ENSLAVED to many People – To the Egyptians. The Babylonians. The Greeks and Syrians. And now the Romans.
- For these JEWS – it was that they were descendants of Abraham (the seed of Abraham. The Offspring of Abraham).

[34] *Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave of sin."*

- Jesus says, "AMEN, AMEN."
- If anyone practices sin. Literally the One doing the sin is a slave.
- *If you continually do the SAME SIN, you are a SLAVE to the sin.*
- The word he uses for SLAVE – *Doulos.*
 - Slave was someone normally owned for work in a house.
 - Being under Someone's total control.
- The BIBLE describes us as BEING a SLAVE to our SIN.
 - 2 Peter 2:19 – [19] *...they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.*
 - Galatians 4:8 – [8] *Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods...*
 - Titus 3:3 – [3] *For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*
 - Romans 6:16-19.

What JESUS is getting at is that these SUPERFICIAL believers don't understand the SEVERITY of their POSITION.

- You cannot be SAVED until you come to the REALIZATION that You are in a PIT of SIN and the only way to LIBERTY is CHRIST.
- *GENUINE FAITH knows they've been given LIBERTY from Sin. Whereas SUPERFICIAL FAITH – Christ is an ADD ON to their sinful life. They stay enslaved to their SIN.*

4) Genuine Faith Entitles Sonship

[35] *The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.*

- The STATUS of the CHRISTIAN has completely changed.
- Just as CHRIST is a Son, we too have been given his privileges and rights.
- The SLAVE has none of those rights... they can be sold. They can be dismissed.
- The SON however will inherit.
- Jesus's point – TRUE FAITH changes your status
 - 1 John 3:1 – [1] *See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.*
 - Galatians 4:6 – [6] *And because we are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" [7] So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.*
 - SONSHIP is about legal rights. IN CHRIST.

Jesus says this reflecting on the FACT that if you become a SON... your STATUS is the same forever. You will not go back to being a SLAVE. It's TRUE LIBERTY.

[36] *So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed*

- Indeed - it's a certainty.
 - When you come to CHRIST, you are forever FREE from the PENALTY of SIN (Rom 8:1).
 - When you come to CHRIST, you are forever FREE from the POWER of SIN (Rom 6:14; 18).
 - When you come to CHRIST, you will one day be FREE from the PRESENCE of SIN (1 Corinthians 15:26).

5) Genuine Faith Loves Christ

[37] *I know that you are offspring of Abraham, yet you seek to kill me because my words find no place in you.*

- John 7:7 – [7] it [the world] *hates me because I testify that its works are evil.*
 - The UNBELIEVING BELIEVER hates the true CHRIST.
 - They RESENT His authority.
 - They SPURN His atonement.
- The GENUINE BELIEVER cannot get enough of JESUS. You just want MORE JESUS.
 - Ephesians 3:19 – [19] *to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*
 - Genuine Believers LOVE Christ.

6) Genuine Faith Resembles the Father

Genuine FAITH causes us to become LIKE our HEAVENLY FATHER. Whereas Superficial Faith Resembles their father DEVIL.

[38] *I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.*

- Those with a SUPERFICIAL FAITH are still under the power of the Devil.
 - 1 John 3:8 – [8] *Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was destroy the works of the devil.*
 - 1 John 5:19 – [19] *We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.*
 - We have been captured by the DEVIL to do his BIDDING.

The gospel is the great transfer from the KINGDOM of DARKNESS. Colossians 1:13 – [13] *He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.*

- The CHRISTIAN begins to become like CHRIST and their Heavenly Father.
- The Jews (Unbelieving Believers) resemble their Father, the DEVIL.

<u>Genuine Faith</u>	<u>Superficial Faith</u>
Abides in the Word (v. 31)	Departs from the Word (v. 31)
Knows the Truth (v. 32)	Does not Know the Truth (v. 32)
Liberty from Sin (v. 32-34; 36)	Enslaved to Sin (v. 32-34; 36)
Status as Son (v. 35)	Status as Slave (v. 35)
Love of Christ (v. 37)	Hatred of Christ (v. 37)
Resembles the Father (v. 38)	Resembles the Devil (v. 38)