



DATE: September 20, 2009

TEXT: John 6: 41-59

TITLE: "John XVII: Come to Jesus"

Have you ever noticed that it is difficult to extract truth from the speeches of politicians?

You can listen to a Democratic Politician talking about the health Care Bill and get one set of facts. You then can hear a Republican Politician talk about the health Care Bill and get another set of fact. You wonder if they are talking about the same bill. What is truth? Who is being honest? Quite truthfully, this is the exact situation we see in our text. Jesus had just made a dramatic statement. Jesus said.....

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. 36But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe.

Our text is a debate among the Pharisees about whether Jesus could be believed. Was he speaking the truth or was he crazy. I will share 3 lessons on this debate that took place between Jesus and the Pharisees. It is a debate about coming to Jesus.

Lesson # 1 The origin of Jesus must be determined. The Pharisees did not believe in Jesus. This is their response to his statement.... (*John 6:41-42*)

41At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven'?"

It is easy for us to criticize the Pharisees. But for a second put yourself in their shoes.

Jesus in our text was clearly claiming divine origins. They knew it. It was clear. But they knew

Joseph and Mary. Luke had not written his Gospel yet. They did not know the story of the

Virgin Birth. I am sure it was very, very hard to believe Jesus. Especially since Jesus was

contradicting some of their basic beliefs. No person gives up basic beliefs easily.

Allow me to apply this truth to our situation. Who do you say Jesus is? I mean, do you really believe Jesus is God? Do you really believe Jesus is your Lord?

Do you know that Jews and Muslims believe in Jesus? Jesus is in the Koran. Allow me to read the Koran. This is a chapter entitled "Mary"

And you shall recount in the Book the story of Mary; how she left her people and betook herself to a solitary place to the east.

We sent to her our spirit in the semblance of a full grown man. And when she saw him she said: "may the Merciful defend me from you! If you fear the Lord, leave me.

"I am a messenger of your Lord" he replied, "and have come to give you a holy son."

"How shall I bear a child," she replied, "when I am a virgin, untouched by man?"

"Such is the will of your Lord," he replied...

Thereupon she conceived, and retired to a far-off place. And when she felt the throes of childbirth she lay down by the trunk of a palm tree crying: " Oh, would that I had died and passed into oblivion.".....

Then she took the child to her people, who said to her: “this is indeed a strange thing! Sister of Aaron, your father was never a whore-monger, nor was your mother a harlot.”

She made a sign to them, pointing to the child. But they replied: “How can we speak to a child in a cradle?”

Whereupon he (that is the baby Jesus) spoke and said; “I am the servant of Allah. He has given me the gospel and ordained me a prophet. His blessing is upon me wherever I go, and he has commanded me to be steadfast in prayer and to give alms to the poor as long as I live. He has exhorted me to honor my mother and purged me of vanity and wickedness. I was blessed on the day I was born, and blessed I shall be on the day of my death; and may peace be upon me on the day I shall be raised to life.”

Such was Jesus, the son of Mary. That is the whole truth, which they are unwilling to accept. Allah forbid that He Himself should beget a son!

Allah is my Lord and your Lord; therefore serve Him. That is the right path

Yet the Sects are divided concerning Jesus. But when the fateful day arrives, woe to the unbelievers! Truly the unbelievers are in the grossest error. For we shall inherit the earth and all who dwell upon it.

Remember the Koran was written in about 620 A.D. Mohammad purposely wrote against Christianity. What is the truth? Is this account of Jesus the truth or is the Gospel of Luke the truth? Or is neither the truth?

Josh McDowell Has written a book entitled Evidence that Demands a Verdict. In this book McDowell states that there are only three possible explanations for the words and actions of Jesus. He is either a Liar or a Lunatic or a Lord.

He is a liar if he claimed to be the Son of God... the Bread of Life if it was a false claim and he knew it was a false claim. He lied. His entire life was a deception.

He was a lunatic if his claim was false but he truly believed it. If I would stand before you today and claim to be God and truly believe... you would call the men in the white coats and have me committed.

The third possibility is that he was speaking the truth. He is Lord. You can then either accept his Lordship or reject his Lordship.

Truthfully the Jewish belief that Jesus was a great man and a great teacher is impossible.

The Muslim position that he was a prophet and servant of Allah is impossible. He claimed to be divine. He claimed to be God.

Where do you stand. Liar, lunatic or Lord. You are here this morning. I believe all here claim Jesus as Lord. But do you truly allow him to be Lord of all your life?

Lesson # 2 Notice, once again, the careful balance between the will of God and the will of man in the process of coming to Christ. *John 6:44-47*

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. 45It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. 46No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. 47I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.

O.K. What is the truth. Do you believe in predestination or do you believe in free will?

My answer is very simple. Yes. Look at this text. The first line says....”**No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him**” Ah ha... predestination. The last line says...

“**47I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.**” Ah ha..... free will you have to believe. The *New American commentary* says this.....

Salvation is never achieved apart from the drawing power of God, and it is never consummated apart from the willingness of humans to hear and learn from God. To choose one or the other will ultimately end in unbalanced, unbiblical theology... Rather than resolving the tension, the best resolution is learning to live with the tension

The application is this.... believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ.... and then.... praise Jesus Christ the he choose to adopt you and make you his child. No pride.... just praise for his live and his action.

Also our text is stressing this point..... because it is the action of God... he does not change his mind. We hare his children... we have eternal life. Again look at our text....

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. 45It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. 46No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. 47I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.

No doubt about it because it is based on the promise of God... not the whim of man. That is the central lesson from this text. Rest assured... Rest in the hands of Jesus.

Finally **Lesson # 3** Real communion is necessary in our walk with Christ *John 6:48-54*

48I am the bread of life. **49**Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. **50**But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. **51**I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."
52Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"
53Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. **54**Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

There is no Last Supper in the Gospel of John. There is not giving of the Communion in the Gospel of John. This is the closest we have to a communion text in John. What is Jesus saying here? I believe Jesus is saying.... follow me and do not expect the following to be easy.

REPEAT Jesus begins this discussion with a reminder of the Exodus event with Moses.

Everyone listening know the story of the time in the wilderness. *Exodus 16: 2 states...*

In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. 3 The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death."

4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see

whether they will follow my instructions.

Notice everyone is grumbling. The Pharisees were grumbling just like the Israelites were grumbling. Grumbling is not being in the will of God. Grumbling is not accepting the will of God in our lives.

Jesus is reminding us that the walk of obedience is not always the easy walk. The Israelites had manna and water every day.... for 40 years. It took 40 years for God to prepare these people to be His people in the Promised land. God is patient.

The truth is this... the Christian walk is not always the easiest walk. Truthfully, it is often far easier to take the wide, non-Christian path. Easier at school. Easier and college. Easier at work. Easier in life. It's easier to grumble than to pray. It's easier to be angry than to forgive. It's easier to sulk than to be joyful in the midst of struggle.

About 8 or 9 years ago I was the speaker at Seneca Hills. That week we also had a missionary from Mainland China. He had been a Christian during the Mao's Cultural revolution. He spoke of seeing his father... who was a college professor being arrested because he was a

Christian and beaten and then returned to the same college to be the janitor and have the other students mock and spit upon him. He spoke about his arrest as a young man... for being a Christian... and thrown in jail and beaten and abused for 20 years.... because he was a Christian. Then he spoke about being released and actually being in the presence of Mao and his struggle... should he hate this man..... should he try to defeat this man... or should he forgive and pray for this man. He said the Lord gave him the power to forgive and pray for Mao. He concluded his sharing with words like this.... **“That day I chose forgiveness over anger. If I had chosen anger I would have been miserable for the rest of my life. Now I can live in the joy of the Lord.”** And let me say.... he was a man of joy and ministry.

True communion is needed. Jesus is the bread of life. We consume the bread. We consume the cup.... and this gives us life..... real life. Not easy life..... real life.... not temporary life.... eternal life. Jesus is the bread of life..... believe it... it is true... is it true in your life?

AMEN