
We are in Chapter 9 of John and tonight we are going to cover verses 4 and 5. Over the last couple of weeks we have been focused on a concept which most of us have a real hard time coming to grips with much less living as if we believe it to be true: [chart 1] *Whatever does not derive from the divine is sinful and evil*. As hard as it may be, this truth is at the root and core of the entire Biblical love story. It is the reason why man could not, on his own, ever solve the issue of sin which separated him from God. It did not matter how much he sacrificed and tried to be “good,” he could never be good enough; he could never be perfect. This is why the solution had to come through God; the one who is perfect. This perfect one had to become a man and live a sinless life and die in our stead in order that you and I could become perfected in Him. This is an important concept which will help us understand why Jesus made mud and placed it on this blind man’s eyes and told Him to go wash before the healing would be effected. But we will talk about that next week. Ahh, the mystery of the mud!

This biblical truth, *whatever does not derive from the divine is sinful and evil* is not so difficult to accept when we talk about it in general terms of God’s plan of redemption. We know we are not perfect. We know we have sinned. We know that we cannot be like God. We know we need a savior. But what we don’t realize, or what we don’t like to accept, is that this truth does not stop at the point of our Salvation. The reason I say this is because many of us live as if we need Jesus’ *help* to make it through life and we call on Him from time to time for that help. But that is a far different notion than believing that we need Him to be our life—from beginning to end—every moment of every day! Jesus did not die to just help us live; He died so that He can live through us and we can find our life in Him. But this reality is only realized when we believe, on a very practical day-in and day-out level, that *whatever does not derive from the divine is sinful and evil*.

The truth is we are *always* desperate for Jesus—always! Unfortunately, we are easily deceived into thinking that that is just not the case. If we were really honest we would have to admit that we proceed through most of our life as if we have most of it under our control and we just need Jesus to get us over the top or to help us with the real difficult issues in our life. But when we live like this we are not living in desperation; rather, we are living in deception. We still believe that on some level we are “good” enough and able enough.

[Chart 2] I want to revisit another chart from last week, but I have changed it up a bit in terms of shading. I think it was a mistake to make the area lighter on the left and darker on the right. In fact, I think those who tend to do a lot of things wrong actually see more clearly than those who do a lot of things really good. Those who “sin” a lot and who are given over to their *flesh* are usually pretty convinced of their depravity. They know it. They have hurt the people they love and they are sickened by it; however, they often don’t think they have any hope of being different so they give themselves over to it. But they are usually well aware of their character defects and their personal issues.

The ones who are truly blind and who live in darkness are those who think they can see. They are the ones who believe they are “good” and acceptable to God largely because they are doing what they consider to be Christian deeds, behaving as Christians should behave. But they are blind to the truth. Later on in chapter 9 Jesus makes this statement to the religious leaders:

John 9:39-41

And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." Those of the Pharisees

who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

In other words, those who do not have a grasp of their absolute destitution and absolute inability to do anything which pleases or is in alignment with God are the most deceived people. They think they are doing good, they are convinced they are doing good, they believe they see, they believe they know the truth, and they stand proudly in their religious convictions; but they live in spiritual darkness and are clouded with spiritual deceit. Ironically, those who are living this way are right now thinking that this does not apply to them but they believe it must apply to someone else, anyone else, just not them

Remember the standard is perfection. *Matthew 5:48*: Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. And perfection is only obtained through faith for without faith it is *impossible* to please God (*Hebrews 11:6*). Our works, our deeds, the fruit of our life must be perfect and it must be birthed from faith (through actively believing the truth) or it is worthless (regardless of the impact in the lives of others, *Matthew 7:21-23*). Someone may be blessed by it and God may use it for good in the life of a person He wants to love, but on your personal ledger it is filled with nothing but evil and God will not recognize these works for they were unauthorized—they were not appointed by the Father. So no matter how much we don't like this it, we must come to grips with this very difficult truth; *whatever does not derive from the divine is sinful and evil.*

If we believed we were truly desperate I am sure a number of things in our life would be radically different:

1. We would believe first of all that human effort accomplishes nothing and that the Words of the Jesus are spirit and life (**John 6:63**). We would live as if the Word of God is our very living manna. We would be in the Word constantly because we know that it is the food for our *New Creation* and the very means by which faith is birthed into our lives (for faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, **Romans 10:17**). The reason the Word is able to produce faith in our lives is because the battle we face is not about good verses bad behavior, but about truth verses error and we must know the truth in order to choose to live by truth. Besides, Jesus said that those who partake of His Word will truly live (**John 6:57**).
2. We would gladly listen to the Words of God and no longer listen to the lies of the one who is the father of all who abide in darkness (**John 8:42-47**).
3. We would give no place of authority in our life to those who care more about honoring each other than they do honoring God (**John 5:44; 7:16-18**).
4. We would not let the temple of the Holy Spirit—our *New Creation*—be overrun with money changers, sheep, oxen and merchants (**John 2:13-17**). In other words, we would not be overtaken by false religious deeds that really just serve to satisfy the lusts and desires of our flesh. We would also not give place to those who try and sell us their spiritual wares (teachings) which are based on lies and falsehood that will trap us in the cycle of false Christian duty and service under the guise of “sacrifice.”
5. We would live as if Jesus is our living water and is sufficient to satisfy even our deepest needs. Most of us have developed so many coping mechanisms be it relationships, behaviors, addictions, religious service, and so on because

we have not let Jesus be Lord of those areas in our soul where our deepest need screams. We would instead continually come to Jesus with all our pains trusting that he will be to us like a perpetual well of water that will always quench our thirst and which will never run dry. We would come to Him and drink trusting that He will provide not what we want, but what He knows that we need (*John 4:10-14; 7:37-38*).

6. We would pick up our matt and walk away, leaving no concessions “just in case” Jesus does not come through in the way that we want Him to provide for us, care for us, or lead us (*John 5:8*).
7. We would run from the darkness into the light and not always be stumbling around in the darkness not knowing what we should do, where we should go, or how things are to be done (*John 3:21; 8:12*).
8. We would believe that He is the I Am—the only one who can truly be our God (*John 6:41; 8:24; 48*).
9. We would live as if our nourishment comes only from doing the will of God and finishing His work (*John 4:34*).
10. We would quickly carry out the tasks assigned to us by the Father.

John 9:4-5

All of us must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent me, because there is little time left before the night falls and all work comes to an end. But while I am still here in the world, I am the light of the world.

I don't think it was happenstance that the truths we listed in items 1-9 all came in the gospel of John before this item 10. Before we can be in a place to understand what the works are that the Lord has assigned us, we must be in a place to listen and hear. We must be in a place where we are depending upon Him for everything, not just some things, but everything. And the reason this is so important is that if we are not in that place relationally with the Father, then there is a good chance that a lot, if not most, of what you have "done for God" have really been your works and not His works. There is a good chance that you have been deceived by the enemy and by your own hearts believing you were doing "good works" that were acceptable and pleasing to God when all the while you were performing "unauthorized" works.

I know this is hard, it is very hard but please don't shut down on me. When God first started making me deal with this truth I was not happy about it at all and I tried to avoid it but He kept insisting that I let His Word be authoritative in my life regardless of my feelings on the matter. I had to honestly consider my years and years of ministry and let His spotlight of truth shine towards my heart. Was it Him or was it me? Did I even know how to tell the difference?

I started to stare at the things Jesus said and let His words roll over and over in my mind and let His words—and not my feelings or my thoughts—be the judge of whether or not I was doing the works of the Father or my own works.

John 4:4

He had to go through Samaria on the way (or He was bound in His will to go through Samaria because the Father had a very specific appointment for Him)

John 4:34

My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing His work.

John 5:19

I assure you, the Son can do nothing by Himself. He does only what He sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and tells Him everything He is doing...

John 5:30; 36

But I do nothing without consulting the Father. I judge as I am told. And my judgment is absolutely just, because it is according to the will of God who sent me; it is not merely my own...my teachings and my miracles. They have been assigned to me by the Father, and they testify that the Father has sent me.

John 6:38

For I have come down from heaven to do the will of God who sent me, not to do what I want.

John 7:16

I am not teaching my own ideas, but those of God who sent me.

John 8:26, 28

I have much to say about you and much to condemn, but I won't. For I say only what I have heard from the one who sent me, and He is true...When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will realize that I am He and I do nothing on my own, but I speak what the Father taught me.

The way Jesus lived is such a powerful litmus test for He is the example of how our life in the *New Creation* is to be lived. After reading the way in which Jesus was in relationship with His Father and the confidence that He had in all that He knew He was to do, I was more than humbled. I knew instantly that so much of my "service" for God was going to burn. The interesting thing though is that knowing that it will burn does not bother me; I am actually relieved. But that is not how I took the news when God first started revealing this to me. No, it bothered me a lot!

In the darkness of my deception, I had been a very "good" Christian soldier and I wanted my commander and chief to acknowledge how hard I worked for Him. Actually, I wanted Him to reward me for it and bless my life. After all, isn't that the way it is supposed to work? At least that is how I thought it was supposed to work. But, instead of blessing, God took my life through a painful journey that has been horrible, terrifying, and down right cruel. However, He knew exactly what I needed in order to be stripped of my own "goodness" and relent of my own "spirituality" and accept the truth that *whatever does not derive from the divine is sinful and evil*. Unfortunately, it took a lot to convince me of this truth and apparently, based on the stormy waves that He still lets crash on my life, it is still taking me a lot to learn to depend upon God for all things.

But the amazing thing is that now I am really glad I know this truth. In **John 8:32** Jesus said that the truth will set you free and it does; it really does. I am so glad to know that *it is possible* to let Jesus do His works in and through my life. I am so glad I belong to Him for His works are perfect and good. I am so glad because I have been made so keenly aware of my inability to do “good” and my ability to be thoroughly deceived in my spirituality that I now just want Him and only Him to be in control of my life. I am so tired of trying to direct my ship. I am tired of trying to justify my life and make it meaningful. I am tired of trying to find purpose and validation through my Christian behavior. I am tired of not knowing for sure if something is of God or not. I am tired of trying to be a Christian and trying to behave like a Christian.

It is actually great news to know that we don't have to worry about what we need to do to please God, we just have to focus on being in relationship with God based on faith and then He will do the things in and through us that the Father has appointed for us.

John 6:57

I live by the power of the living Father who sent me; in the same way, those who partake of me will live because of me.

What a relief; this is truly good news. Do you understand? *It is possible* to live this way! Jesus lived by the power of the Father and in this same way, we can live if we partake of (or continually consume) Him. This is so important. I have had so many Christians mock and trivialize the truth because they simply do not believe it is possible to be in this kind of relationship with God where you only do what He

tells you to do, only go where He tells go, and only say what He tells you to say. They think I am over spiritualizing the Christian life as if this kind of living is reserved for when we are dead. It is so sad that they are bound to the religion of their *Old Man* all the while listening to the voice of their other father. They never truly learn to live a life in the freedom and peace that God said would be ours.

I also want to make something very clear; the works Jesus talks about are the Father's works. The Greek is very clear about this point. Yes, they have been assigned to us. **John 3:27**: God in heaven appoints each person's work. But they are His works and not ours. The reason I make this point is that most of us are fixated on how we can be useful to God and all the wonderful ways in which God is going to use us. As a result, we often drive our own agenda based on our need to be important and our need to be validated in this life. Ultimately "serving" God becomes more about the "me" than it does being God's possession for Him to do with as He pleases.

What if God's assignment for you is to wait, and wait, and wait? What if God's assignment for you is to simply pray for others? What if God's assignment for you is to be physically sick and unable to "do" anything for the Lord? What if God's assignment for you is to support others while they are the ones who do His "work?" What if His assignment for you is nothing like you hoped for and entails nothing cool, dramatic, or world changing? What if He just wants you to work, live a quiet life, and honor Him? What if?

Regardless of what God has assigned for you and regardless of how you might feel about His decision, believe me, the only way you will experience His peace, His freedom, and His joy is if you choose to be in alignment with His will and you forego your own will. Jesus always only did what the Father wanted Him to do and that is to be our way as well.

Jesus tells us that we must quickly carry out the tasks that the Father has assigned to us because there is little time left before the night falls and all work comes to an end. I have heard people speak about this as if Jesus was talking about His death; especially since at this point in John we are only about 6-months out from Jesus crucifixion. They think this because in the next verse Jesus says:

John 9:5

But while I am still here in the world, I am the light of the world.

They take this reference to being in the world and apply it to Jesus physical presence on the earth. However, looking at the scriptures as a whole, I just can't make that conclusion. I believe Jesus is making an apocalyptic comment here (which I believe He also does in *verse 39* when He says that it is for judgment that He came into the world). As long as we are in the world, Jesus is in the world; for He lives in us and through us. Besides, Jesus death totally kicked off the work that God has for us as it was His death that resulted in God sending the Holy Spirit to dwell in our *New Creation* and gift us for His purposes. So the work did not end when He died, it just began.

The only time when there will be no work done on this earth is during a very dark time which we call the time of God's terrible wrath. This is a very scary time when God will unleash His judgment on all of creation. Imagine, by the time His judgment is completed about 2/3 of those living on the earth will be dead. But before He pours out His terrible wrath Jesus will gather to Himself all those who belong to Him: believers who are alive and those who have died. During this time of indignation on the earth we will be taken into His presence and Jesus will hide

us away in the homes that He has prepared for us. We will stay safely hidden in the Father's House until the time that Jesus is ready to return to the earth and bring us with Him. When He takes us off this earth His mysterious plan of bringing salvation to Jews and Gentiles alike will be fulfilled; His work of redemption will end and no more work will be done. The light of the gospel of Jesus will stop shining on mankind for Jesus will take this time prepare to wage war on all those who have opposed Him. This will be the darkest of times that mankind has ever known.

Matthew 24:21-22

For that will be a time of greater horror than anything the world has ever seen or will ever see again. In fact, unless that time of calamity is shortened, the entire human race will be destroyed. But it will be shortened for the sake of God's chosen ones.

Mankind will no longer have the opportunity to be saved; instead, their introduction to Jesus will be as their judge, jury, and executioner. (***Revelation 10:7; 14:13-16; 19:11-21; Isaiah 26:20; John 14:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18***).

But that time is not here yet however no one knows when it will arrive. It will come as a thief in the night; unsuspecting. Therefore, as long as we remain, Jesus wants His light to shine through us to both a lost and dying world and to those who have yet to understand why they must live in absolute desperation dependent upon Jesus for everything they say and do. This is also why we are exhorted to quickly carry out the tasks assigned to us.

I find it fascinating that this idea of blindness, seeing and not seeing, light and darkness, applies in so many contexts 1) to the Saved verses the unsaved, 2) to the one who does the will of the Father verses the one who thinks they are right with God because of their religious deeds, 3) to the believer who lives from *New Creation* verses the *Old Man*, and 4) to those who have the opportunity for Salvation and those whose end is a terrible wrath with no chance for salvation. This is a powerful metaphor.

We should also not miss out on the fact that when Jesus says He is the light of the world that He is making a reference to *Genesis 1:1-5* (which John also references in *John 1:1-5*) as Jesus was the light of creation which pierced the darkness and caused life and growth on this earth long before He created the sun and the moon.

In closing, I want you to each settle your hearts and seriously consider whether or not you know if you have been carrying out the tasks that have been assigned to you. If you are not sure, don't freak. Remember, you are deeply loved and there is no condemnation for those who are Christ Jesus (*John 3:18; Romans 8:1*). So this is not an issue which should cause your pride to rise up. Besides, for many of you, this might be the first time you have been taught these truths and you have never known any different.

It is critical that you realize that God is not mad at you and He is not disappointed; it is impossible for Him to mad at you. He poured all His disappointment out on His Son. So don't be upset and don't be worried. God just wants you to know the pathway to experiencing all of Him and receiving all that He has promised: peace, freedom, rest, and a very light load. God is calling you to realize how desperate you are for His life. He wants you to abandon your own way,

your own will, your own “goodness” and your own “spirituality.” Trade it all in for absolute dependence upon the I Am.

The good news is that you can start now, tonight. He wants you to simply repent, which is to agree that His way is the only way and then to start to believe and apply the truths we reviewed at the beginning of this teaching, which by the way I have already posted on the blog so you can review them for yourselves.

I know this can be hard hard, but you must be aware that the Father is seeking those who will worship Him in spirit and truth. Therefore, it is not enough to have good intentions; you must always live in the truth. Please don't let your feelings control your thoughts; don't let the religious ideas you have learned control your thoughts; instead, let the Word of God always be authoritative in your life and let His words control your thoughts. It is the only way to continually experience His life.

Let's Pray

