

Mt. Lebanon Church

Adult Sunday School Lesson

5.3.2020

Please look up and read all verses in their entirety. I have only written partial verses.

Make your own notes, write down other scriptures that you run across while studying, write down questions that you may have or comments as well. Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what he would have you to see through the study of Gods word.

The Righteous Branch

Jeremiah 23: 1 – 8

Today's church is promising Hope and Change, but sadly enough, without salvation. False prophets tell deceptive stories of comfort and peace, misleading people. They claim to be speaking for the Lord, but, are actually promoting themselves. They take away from the word of God, the wrath and judgement that comes through sin and worldliness, and tell those who will listen, only of the good and prosperous times ahead in their future.

Jeremiah tells of just such a thing going on, and God's plan concerning how he was going to deal with it.

Before we get to the problem of the wrong doing on the part of the Pastors or Shepherds, let's look at the duties of the shepherd.

The book of John tells of the conversation that Peter and Christ had, explaining the duties of the shepherd. The first thing that we learn is the duties of the shepherd is based on the love we have for God.

It is apparent that the shepherds that Jeremiah was speaking about, had no love for God.

Christ gave Peter three commands that covered all the duties of a good shepherd.

John 21: 15 – 19,do you love me....

#1 Feed my lambs....

#2 Tend my sheep....

#3 Feed my sheep....

....follow me....

This scripture covers everything from the basics of the gospel to the unsaved for salvation, to the biblical precepts that teaches us how to grow and mature in the Lord, to training in righteousness to equip the saints so that they may stand firm in trials and tribulations, for preparation not only to follow but to lead, to be a good watchman and to protect the sheep.

Those called to servitude as shepherds in the body of Christ, must take the responsibility seriously. There are to many who claim to be called, but demonstrate clearly, by the fruits that they bear, that they are not qualified, according to Gods word. To be shepherds, we must, nurture, tend to, feed and protect the sheep.

Jeremiah 23: 1, Woe to the pastors....

Here we see, the Lord through Jerimiah pointed out the sinful worldliness of the shepherds.

Instead of being tender hearted, showing Gods grace, mercy and love, instead of feeding them, instead of showing oversight over them, they, without Christ and the Holy Spirit being involved, were reigning over them. They were pressuring Gods people, making unreasonable demands on them, exploiting them for their own personal worldly gain.

There are churches today in the same trouble, due to the ones the church itself called to be their ministers, (without Gods calling) these ministers are unfaithful to their calling.

2 Corinthians 11: 12 – 15,deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ....

Jerimiah 23:2 -I will visit upon you the evil of your doings....

If, as shepherds, we do not take care of the sheep (Gods people) in the way that he intended, through mercy and kindness, then God will bring justice and punishment upon those who intentionally mislead and deceived his people.

2 Timothy 4: 3 – 4, For the time is come when people will not endure sound doctrine.... Will turn their ears away from the truth.

All of Paul's letters to the church has warnings of false prophets and deception, that will be allowed to come into the church (The Body of Christ) in the end times. This shows us that God knew in Paul's time, when the church was being brought into existence, that man would try to use it for personal gain and self preservation. As we can see, in the world around us, that deception is an effective weapon in Satan's arsenal. It continually lures the sinner away from salvation and distracts the immature believer into a false sense of Hope and Peace that denies them the ability to spread the true meaning of God's word and salvation to others.

For this, God says, there will be judgement and punishment.

Jeremiah 23: 3 – 4,I will gather the remnant of my flock....will bring them again into their folds, they shall be fruitful and increase....I will set up shepherds which shall feed them....

Even though, God's people are guilty of worldliness and sinfulness, he still has compassion for them. God's promises are generous, he is faithful to supply his people with the things that they need.

Psalms 78: 38 – 39,he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity....

God's unconditional mercy versus man's behavior. God could have chosen wrath, but instead, chooses compassion and forgiveness. Wrath was poured out on the one who hung on the cross, Christ took our punishment of sin, so we don't have to.

1 John 1:9 – If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Jeremiah 23: 5 – 6,I will raise unto David a righteous branch.... He shall be called, the Lord our righteousness.

Christ, the branch, also called the Lord our righteousness, is our righteousness. He will be, and is now, passing judgement and justice, that will bring safety and security. Christ also provides us with justification, declared unto us by faith, given to those who believe in him.

Righteousness is believing the promises of God, believing fully, that he will keep his word.

Romans 4: 20 – 21,He did not waiver at the promise of God through unbelief....

Paul gives us an example and some understanding on the definition of righteousness. Abraham attained true righteousness because he believed.

Jerimiah 23: 7 – 8, behold the days come....the Lord liveth....they shall dwell in their own land.

Jerimiah speaks of a time and place in Gods plan that has never been fulfilled yet. Gods purpose here, is that the nation of Israel will willingly serve him under the leadership of their King. (Christ)

We live in a day, (The Grace Dispensation Period) that Gods purpose, is that all nations would willingly serve him by the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit, under the supervision of Christ and the cross, that provided unto us salvation.

Acts 2: 29 – 36,this Jesus, God has raised up....being exalted....recieved the power of the Holy Spirit, he poured out this....

The resurrection of Christ, the message of the church, Christ and the cross, is our witness of salvation to the world. This is the message of the early church, and continues to be the message of the modern day church. The only thing that can change the message is man, God does not change.

Jerimiah 23: 1 – Woe unto the Pastors.

Lesson Notes:

Instead of faithfully fulfilling their duties, Judas leaders were destroying the flock. They were doing the work of the peoples enemies.

God is still raising up shepherds today to lead his flock, (the church) and he still upholds the same high standards for his shepherd/ leaders.

We look forward, with anticipation and joy to this restoration at the return of our savior Jesus Christ, when he establishes his kingdom of peace and righteousness.

God is working to save all those ha has called to salvation.

God desires the leaders of his people, to care for their needs.

His kingdom will be governed properly, and prosperity will be the result of his wisdom.

He will execute judgement and justice for all.

He will judge wrong doers, and provide justice for those who are wronged.

Let us pray.

If anyone has any questions, comments or would just like to discuss any of the scriptures, feel free to call, text or email me. Keep praying for each other and all that God lays upon your heart. Hope to see everyone soon. God Bless.

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