

Sermon Outline

“LIFE IN HIS NAME”: THE PURSUIT OF WHOLENESS AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

NO MORE JUDGMENT (JOHN 5:24)

I. Proud Daddy

II. “Truly, Truly” (Jn 5:24)

- A. He begins with an oath formula: “Truly, truly, I say to you...”
- B. The last time we encountered these words was back in verse 19: “So Jesus said to them, *‘Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.’*”
- C. Whenever Jesus begins his statements with this kind of formula, he is speaking with the solemnity of an oath.
- D. Irony:
 - 1. On one hand, Jesus is tried by the Jews.
 - 2. On the other hand, Jesus is the future Judge of the world.
 - 3. So who is ultimately on trial here? Who is really in the judge’s seat? Who is the real Judge? The Jewish leaders—or the One who stands before them?

III. Hearing Jesus, Believing his Abba (Jn 5:24)

- A. Having sworn an oath that what he is saying is truth, Jesus testifies: “whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life.”
- B. Eternal life is life that survives the final judgment. It is the resurrection life taught by God to the great prophets of Israel.
- C. What is needed for someone to gain eternal life?
 - 1. First: The person who wants to gain eternal life must *hear the word of Jesus*. “[W]hoever hears my word...”
 - John 3:17: “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”
 - 2. Second: The person who wants to gain eternal life “*believes him*” who sent Jesus, namely, God the Father.
- D. We are reminded of the principle behind Jesus’ works: “For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise” (v 19).

- E. As we believe in Jesus, we are ultimately believing in the Father to save us from our sins.

IV. The Believer Has Passed from Death to Life (Jn 5:24)

- A. Then comes the great promise.
—For the one who hears Jesus’ words and believes that they are also the words of the Father, Jesus makes this astounding guarantee: “He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”
- B. When we take the Rabbi Jesus at his word, when we trust that he speaks the mind of God, and when we rest our tired sin-laden souls on him, we are immediately spared eternal condemnation.
1. We no longer go into condemnation, but immediately enter eternal life.
 2. Language is crucial here.
 - a. Eternal life is a completed action.
—Rabbi Jesus says the believer “*has passed* from death to life.”
 - b. Eternal life is a present possession:
—“whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me *has eternal life*.”
 - c. Summary: Eternal life is a completed action, a done deal, and an ongoing state of affairs.
- C. In one sense, the resurrection is already a reality for those who believe in Jesus.
- D. Since eternal life is closely tied to the final judgment and the coming resurrection, it is part of the great end of all things, the new creation that is to come.
1. Eternal life is eschatological reality. It is part of the ultimate reality of holiness, goodness, and justice that God will bring about.
 2. If we have eternal life, we have entered into this final reality.
 3. Eternal life is not...
 - a. something you have only when you die.
 - b. something you get only when the Lord Jesus returns.
 4. Eternal, resurrecting life is something you *now* possess through faith in Jesus Christ.
 5. To have eternal life means that you will “not come into judgment...”

V. Condemn Nation

- A. What does it mean to have passed from death to life? How does this help us live in the particular society that God has placed us?
- B. In Singapore, we live, breathe, and exhale criticism, complaining, testing, assessment; in short, *judgment*.
- C. Part of this is certainly self-defense. We judge others to take the attention off ourselves and make ourselves feel better about our own sins and inadequacies.

VI. Christian Living as Living under Non-Judgment

- A. If eternal life is the state in which the believer lives, Christian discipleship is about learning to live as one who *has* received eternal life, who *has* passed from condemnation into life.
—If we have passed from death to life, how does this help us to live as people of God?
- B. First: We can stand firm under the judgment of others.
○ Galatians 5:1: “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.”
- C. Second: We are freed from having to condemn others to make ourselves feel better.
—We can exercise true judgment/discernment, rather than self-promoting criticism.
○ Jn 7:24: “Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”
- D. Third: We can run home to God—and keep running home to God every moment, every day of our lives.
○ Jn 1:12: “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,”

VII. Living the Life

The Day of Judgment is coming. But there is a way to escape judgment. It is by believing in God and the Son he sent. For broken and tired sinners who believe in Jesus, eternal life is a present reality. We have crossed over from death into life. We will no longer come under God’s condemnation. Instead, we have been set free from final condemnation and all the fearful, destructive urges and behaviors that such judgment evokes. So what are we to do now? Go home to the Father. Go home to the God who gives himself to us in Jesus Christ for our life, our blessing, our holiness, our obedience, our glory, our peace. Talk to the Father. Pray. Worship. Delight in his Word. Seek first his Kingdom. Live for him—knowing full well that he is fully, completely, one hundred per cent for us and will not let us go.

Questions for Reflection

1. Was there anything in particular about today's sermon that blessed and encouraged you?
2. Was there anything that you disagree with or found difficult to accept?
3. What is eternal life? Explain this concept in terms of the coming Day of Judgment.
4. According to Jn 5:24, what must we do to gain eternal life?
5. Why does Jesus call his audience to believe the Father rather than believe in him for salvation?
6. "He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life." When does the believer receive eternal life?
7. In the sermon, we learned that eternal life is an eschatological reality. What does this mean?
8. How do we live daily in a state of peaceful, non-condemnation, especially in a society that highly prizes performance?
9. How does being free from judgment free us in turn from the "need" to condemn/judge others?
10. What is the ultimate blessing that comes with non-condemnation?