

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #265

Tuesday of Passion Week... Day of Testing and Teaching

Jesus' Final Public Message

JN 12.44-50

44 Then Jesus cried out, *“Whoever continues to believe in me does not believe in me only, but also in the one who sent me.*

45 “The one who sees me for who I really am is seeing the one who sent me. 46 I have come in a decisive way into the world as light, so that no one who believes in me should make their home in darkness.

47 “If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I myself do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 “There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will judge them at the last day. 49 For I did not speak on my own initiative, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. 50 I know that his command imparts eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has permanently entrusted me to say.”

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This “superscript ID” is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	The Temple Courts in Jerusalem
Timeline	Early April (Month 39)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VIII: Passion Week
	C. Tuesday: Day of Testing and Teaching
Title	I 5. Jesus' Final Public Message

COMMENT:

Today's posting has huge historical significance. After 264 sections in the DAILY JESUS NEWS, and the 15th reading so far of this one day of Jesus' life--Tuesday of Passion Week--we finally come to the last evangelistic message and public teaching of Jesus' ministry. These are the last words Jesus spoke in a preaching context; his final appeal and invitation to faith in him.

After speaking for tens of thousands of hours, all over Judea, Perea, Samaria, Galilee, and Gentile regions surrounding Galilee...to rich, poor, Jew, Gentile, slaves, free people, educated, uneducated, men, women, children, adults, religious, irreligious, friends, enemies, the hurting--all sin-sick souls in need of the Great Physician that he was--this is what he left the unbelieving world as his last Word.

Jesus had just poured his heart out in his seven-fold woes to the Pharisees and teachers of the Law. Then he took some time to examine the giving of alms that was going on in the Temple Treasury, and was delighted to see the cheerful, just-like-him kind of sacrificial giving of a poor widow. He rose from his seat to deliver these solemn words.

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Since this text is found only in John, it is not surprising that they contain the most important themes of Jesus' evangelism found in this gospel. These are the notions of Jesus as *"the Word"* of God, and the triple, related ideas of Jesus as the *"light, life, and love"* of God. We will look at each of these now.

WORD. John presented Jesus as the eternal "Word" of God in the first few words of this gospel. Jesus said four things about his Word in these brief verses. His Words were spoken to be heard by all, but people have a personal choice to make about whether they will believe them or not (12.47). Rejection of Jesus' words constitutes a personal rejection of him (12.48). Therefore, everyone will be judged in the final judgement by our personal response to Jesus' Words—they are that important (12.48). Finally, Jesus Words came from the Father—they are revelation straight from the throne of God (12.49). Jesus' gospel—his Word—is therefore the most important message ever spoken on this earth.

LIFE. What Jesus communicated from his Father was a "command"—not a mere optional selection of material for an itinerant teacher and preacher. This Word was intended to lead people into the faith that would give them eternal life—God's own quality of never-ending life—to everyone who believed. Jesus IS the eternal life that his Word promised, described, and imparted. He would prove that in 5 days when he rose from the dead. Jesus came to give eternal life to those who believe in him, and this goal was central to his mission.

LIGHT. This is the primary symbol Jesus used to describe himself. He defined himself as light here as the one who made his invisible Father perfectly visible and knowable in himself. Seeing (perceiving) Jesus is seeing the Father in living color! ***"If you have seen me, you have seen the father."*** This makes Jesus the light.

LOVE. Though Jesus did not use the word "love" in this text, he clearly implied it. His Words, ***"I did not come to judge the world, but to save it,"*** are exactly the same as what he said to Nicodemus in JN 3.17. In that verse, the Father sent the Son to save the world because it expressed the way he ***"loved the world in such a way that he gave his only, unique Son..."*** (JN 3.16). In the gospel of John, the Father sending his Son to save the world is the utmost expression of his love. So it is here, in Jesus' final words.

The unparalleled significance of Jesus as the living "Word" from God, the "light of the world," the source of "eternal life" for all who believe in him, and the "love" of the God whose nature IS love are all brought together in Jesus' final words to the unbelieving world.

If these were the only words Jesus ever spoke, they would be more than enough to lead everyone in the world to faith in him if they were simply heeded.

APPLICATION:

These were Jesus' final evangelistic words to the world. He entrusted them to us so that we would make sure that every person in the world hears them and understands them in their own language. He completed his task; ours is still unfinished.

How can you increase your involvement in *"making disciples of all the nations?"*

We have asked this question in the application section of the DAILY JESUS NEWS on a regular basis because it IS truly our highest priority, unfinished task as followers of Jesus. In the end, little else counts in eternity. So we ask again...

What can you do to become more effective and involved in personal evangelism and missions? How much more time, money, gifting, and energy can you give to the mission that caused Jesus to save you?

When? How? Where? With whom will you step it up?