

GracePoint: A Weekly Sermon Discussion

46 – How Jesus Teaches

Announcements:

10/17 @6:30 -

Men's Discipleship
- Chapter 23

10/18 @6:30 -

Women's Bible
Study

10/19 @7:00 -

Prayer

10/20 @6:30 -

Grace Group

10/23 @8:30 -

Sunday School

ICE BREAKER: Who is/was your favorite teacher?

Earlier this week Jayden was writing an email to one of his teachers. To make a long story short there was some confusion and a homework assignment had been lost. Our goal in helping to write this email was to get him to see the difference between “I turned it in and want to know why I got a zero” and “I am wondering what can be done to ensure that I do not get a zero on this assignment.” In other words, there are often different ways to say the same thing. One can seem accusatory, the other more peaceful, sometimes we say something to encourage and the same thing can be taken as a rebuke. In our passage for today we see that Jesus was clearly aware that there were different ways to say the same thing, and we can learn something in understanding how and why Jesus would say certain things to certain people. In all of the passages we will read today the foundational message is the same, it is what we looked at on Sunday, that defilement stems from the heart. Therefore, today I would like to spend our time looking at WHO heard this message and HOW Jesus said it in two different ways.

READ: Matthew 15:1-12

This first one is to the Pharisees. In fact, they really brought this upon themselves. They were so caught up in their own man-made laws and regulations that they were completely ignoring the commands of God and expecting Jesus to follow them rather than God (thus their legalistic heart had led them astray!). What is interesting is that when Jesus is approached by these accusations and sees their heart he responds directly. He calls them hypocrites, he tells them that all the bad things they read of in Isaiah were spoken of them, he reminds them that their laws are nothing compared to God's laws. In other words, when we think of Jesus talking to the Pharisees harshly, it is pretty much all here! So here then is our first lesson. Sometimes we need to hear the painful truth. Often the hardest heart needs to hear the most bold proclamation of the truth. But even if that is what the hard heart needs, that is not necessarily what the hard heart wants. Thus the Pharisees were “offended”. So often we go around trying not to offend or beating around the bush, but Jesus was not always this way. Sometimes people are offended by the truth, the problem then is with them, not the truth. The beauty is that often that offense can be used by God to strip away a hard exterior!

DISCUSS: Why is it important for us to see this sort of boldness from Jesus? How can we emulate this?

READ: Matthew 15:13-20

Here the same thought is given, but this time to a much different audience, he is talking with his disciples. Therefore, here the thought is not to humble or correct, but to encourage and instruct. Instead of calling them hypocrites and rebuking them he seeks to give understanding. He speaks on a (very!) plain level. He uses bodily functions that everyone was aware of to get the point across. He uses parables to make the thought have more sticking power in their brains. Even though the disciples were struggling to understand, their hearts were in a different place, and thereof could take a different form of instruction. Again there are some important lessons here for us. He will care for his disciples, he will give them what they need, his instruction to us is important and useful, and done with love. He knows us and knows when we need tough love and when his gentle instruction will get the point across. The question for us is if we will listen!

DISCUSS: How do you feel you learn lessons better? Can you think of a time in your life when you have experience that God often teaches us in different ways? What lessons should we take from this?