



**Sermon Notes**

Eighth Sunday after Trinity  
29 July 2012, Anno Domini

**The Eighth Sunday after Trinity.**

*The Collect.*

**G**OD, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth; We humbly beseech thee to put away from us all hurtful things, and to give us those things which are profitable for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*14 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. 15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? 16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. 18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him. 19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me? 20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? 21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. 22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. 23 If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day? 24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. (John 7:14-24)*

Should the any man judge another? If so, should a Christian judge another? If so, by what measure should a Christian judge? It would be impossible to live in the world without exercising the means of judgment with which the Lord has imbued us. Our sense to judge right and wrong, expedience and foolishness, have been implanted in the minds of every human being created. We daily judge the kind of food that is needful for our bodies, the kind of places we frequent, and the kind of friends with whom we associate. We would be fools to choose people as friends whose values are diverse from

ours as associates, would we not?

There are really only two kinds of judgment – good and bad. If we judge wisely regarding our foods, our investments, our careers, our soul mates, we have prospects for a happy life. If we judge foolishly in these areas, we may find ourselves in great sorrow. Among other things, we learn how to judge from the words of the Lord in today's passage: Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. The modern church has been rendered sterile by an over-enthusiastic observance and misapplication of the words of Christ in another place – "***Judge not that ye be not judged.***" (Matthew 7:1) This quote is most often taken completely out of context and stands the principle Christ is conveying on its head. Remember the fuller quote and meaning: ***For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.*** (Matt 7:2-5) In other words, do not judge others by a more stringent standard than you judge yourself, for it is by the standard you judge others that you, too, shall be judged.

What does Christ mean when He commands us to judge with ***righteous judgment?*** How do we know the definition and standards of such righteous judgment? Do we not hold it in our hands – the HOLY BIBLE! Whatsoever God calls sin, we are obligated to call sin even if that sinner is a brother or sister. ***24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*** Men judge not only by appearance, but according to their own personal animosities as in the case of the text today.

The occasion is the Feast of Tabernacles. If we read the first few verses of this chapter, we will discover that even the brothers of Jesus ridiculed Him and did not believe in Him. ***His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him.*** (John 7:3-5) It is suggested by Scripture that even His own dear mother, Mary, did not comprehend fully who He was until after the Resurrection. They judged Jesus by the common appearance and not the Power of God that was in His Person.

There is a new Presbyterian minister who has come to the Korean Presbyterian Church. As usual, the gossipers try to find something wrong with him instead of something right. He is the most qualified Korean minister to come to these parts from the standpoint of education and experience. He is a graduate of the Korean Military Academy, a retired Lt. Colonel, a graduate of the Presbyterian Seminary in Australia with a baccalaureate, from Fuller Theological with a Masters of Divinity; yet, the gossipers are busy. "***Why would such a man so qualified come to a small church in Alabama? He must have something wrong with his character.***" It is almost amusing to consider what those same gossipers would have said of Jesus Christ....but wait a minute! That DID so scandalize the Lord Himself, didn't they?

If you cannot challenge the message, then attack the Messenger! (an old established principle of detractors). ***14 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. 15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?*** Notice, they do not question the validity of His learning and teaching, but they question ***How did He come to KNOW it!*** If a man is too little trained, the detractor will question how does He know so much! If the man bringing the uncomfortable message is highly trained, they will question the truth of his sanity. Remember the words of Festus to Paul? ***And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.***

(Acts 26:24)

How proudly do many clerics boast of their diplomas and degrees, their superior learning and calling when the most humble of believers in the audience may have been taught more directly by God the truths of the Gospel! When shall we ever learn that the authority with which we speak the Gospel is not ours, but God's? Charles Spurgeon was converted by the preaching of an illiterate country deacon. The deacon clumsily spoke the truth of the Gospel to Mr. Spurgeon. It was not the eloquence, or lack thereof, of the deacon that touched the heart of that great preacher, but the authority of God inherent in the Word of God that the beloved old deacon spoke. Who cares how one comes by truth just as long as it is TRUTH? **16 *Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. 18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.*** If the truth of God is spoken by a devil, it is yet the truth of God. Remember the words of the ungodly High Priest, Caiaphas, who spoke the truth and prophecy of God even if unwittingly? ***And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.*** (John 11:49-52)

When we, as ministers of the Gospel, preach sermons that may move many souls, can we lay claim to the power of that sermon? I think not, if the sermon comes from God. It is HIS sermon! The people of God are simply the vessels of gold, silver, stone, and wood in which the Bread of Heaven is served. The quality of that Bread is not dependent upon the vessel in which it is served.

If a sermon is ever preached that does not point to the beauty and hope of Christ is only a man's sermon. **19 *Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?*** When my son, Michael, was four years old, there was a little game he loved to play on me. He would say in the morning, "Dad, today is 'opposites' day, OK?" I would agree to his silly game and forget the consequences. Later, he would ask to go to the market for 'chocolate eggs' a Norwegian chocolate treat. If I said 'No', he would say that meant 'Yes' because today was opposites day. So I would relent and go for the treat. That was an innocent child's game, but it is also a deadly adult game as we see in the text today. They all considered themselves virtuous, yet none truly kept the Law of God. **20 *The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?*** To the only one among them who was truly righteous, these fools accused of having a devil. Ironically, it was their own tongues that were possessed of devils.

We constantly, by our natures, attempt to exonerate ourselves of sin by rationalization and redirection, but such tactics do not alter truth. It is always the other driver who is crazy while we are wise and prudent behind the wheel. It is the neighbor's child always who starts the fight and not our little fair-haired darlings.

**21 *Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. 22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the Sabbath day circumcise a man. 23 If a man on the Sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day?*** If we will know the will of God, we must also know God to whom that will belongs. Look at the reason of God in all things. Do not disobey His perfect will by a hypocritical and superficial adherence to the letter of the law. The more weighty things of God supersede our faulty

maneuvering around the demands of the law. If we are able to always place LOVE at the top, we shall do well, for it is upon love (the love of God and our neighbors) that all of the law and the prophets hang.

24 **Judge (apply God's judgment) *not according to the appearance* (the outward form), *but judge righteous judgment* (based on God's authoritative Word).** If we judge according to the world and appearance, we are judging amiss. If we judge with an application of God's Word, mingled with love, we judge not according to our own weakly senses, but His. AMEN