

Sermon Notes for Mt. 21:23-27, Lent V (first sermon)

1. This text is paralleled at <sup>day</sup> Mk. 11:27-33 and Lk. 20:1-8. It happened on Jesus' last full working, Tuesday of holy week. It has been called the most crowded day of His life.
2. While Jesus was teaching the people in the Temple He was approached by members of the Sanhedrin, the chief religious council of the Jews. There were chief priests, scribes and elders. They had the right and responsibility to protect the religious life of the Jews. But, on this occasion, they misused their privilege for an evil reason. This incident is similar to the time (Jn. 1:19) they inquired of the Baptist: "Who are you?"
3. They ask two questions which have the word "authority" in common. The words "these things" in the first question refer to His entry into Jerusalem (Mt. 21:1-11), cleansing the Temple (vss. 12-13), healing the people (vs. 14) and teaching the people (vs. 23).
4. Jesus had answered both of these questions for the last three years. His miracles proved that He was the Son of God. His Words had proved to the people that His Father had sent Him to save mankind. The Jewish officials knew the answers to these questions. They meant only evil.
5. They asked Jesus two questions. He asked them only one in return. Jesus was laying a trap for His enemies. It is a principle in the O.T. that evil men become victims of the traps which they set for others. See. Prov. 28:10; 26:27; Ps. 7:15.16; 94:23; Dan. 6:24; Esther 7:10.
6. By the term "baptism of John" Jesus meant the entire theology of John the Baptist, namely his teaching and his baptism. John preached repentance and forgiveness of sins just as Jesus did. John preached the Gospel just as Jesus did. John's baptism forgave the people's sins. John's theology and baptism were the same as that of Jesus. They stood or fell together.
7. "From heaven" means "divine". "From men" means "not divine". The Jewish authorities knew the answer to Jesus' question. But they had rejected John before Jesus came. Read Jn. 1:19-28. The testimony of John left them cold and indifferent. They rejected both John and Jesus. Read Mt. 11:16-19. The people did nothing but complain about both of them.
8. First they came to Jesus with an evil intention. When Jesus asked them a question they revealed two more flaws in their character: a) They refused to admit that John's baptism was from heaven because in that case Jesus would have asked them: "Then, why did you not believe in ME?" b) They were afraid to say that John's baptism was from men because they were cowards. They were afraid of the people who considered John a prophet. One sin leads to another sin. Sin is endless.
9. Now comes a third sin. They lied. They said: "We don't know." They did know. But their own sins of denial and their fears of the people caused them to lie. They are of their father, the devil, the father of lies. Jn. 8:44.
10. There is a further sin which is not stated here but which is implied. Mk. 11:18 and Lk. 19:47, which happened on the previous day, tell us that the chief priests and the scribes were trying to destroy Jesus. Note how these unbelievers are following the devil as he is described in Jn. 8:44. The devil causes unbelief, deceit, lies and murder. The light of God's Word exposes his evil and then he flees. In the final analysis the devil himself is nothing but a coward. He, like the Jewish authorities, is very powerful and has the power to work destruction. He, like the Jewish authorities, roars and makes a big noise. He, like the Jewish authorities, is very cunning and smart. But the person who trusts in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins and strength, can and does conquer Satan and all his hosts. Read Eph. 5:16; I Pet. 5:9; James 4:7. The Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. I Jn. 2:8. Jesus destroyed him who had the power of death, the devil. Heb. 2:14. The devil, the accuser of Christians, has been thrown out. Rev. 12:10. If we are armed with the Word of God, Satan flees. Mt. 4:1-11.

Sermon ~~Notes~~ for Mt. 21:23-27, Lent V (first sermon)

*Outline*

Theme: JESUS DEALS WITH THE HOSTILE UNBELIEF OF HIS ENEMIES

Introduction: Three weeks ago our sermon on Mk. 9:14-29 told us how Jesus dealt with the lack of faith in His disciples and of the man whose son was grievously possessed by an evil spirit. Jesus rebukes such unbelief but we know that He will not cut off the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. But today we have the situation of Jesus dealing with the hostile unbelief of His enemies.

### I-JESUS ENDURES THE PLOTS OF HIS ENEMIES

A-It is clear from Mk. 11:18 and Lk. 19:47 that, just prior to our text the members of the Jewish Council were plotting to destroy Jesus. Before they came to Jesus on the occasion of our text it is clear that they must have had a secret meeting as to their strategy. Both the parallel accounts in Mk.(11:27) and Lk. (20:1) tell us that there were chief priests, scribes and elders. These three groups comprised the entire Jewish Council. And, during their meeting with Jesus, when Jesus asked them "Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?" *say* all three evangelists that they reasoned among themselves. They had a meeting right in Jesus' presence. They had no individual convictions. Confession is personal. See Mt. 10:32. The true witness does not have to plot. He has convictions.

B-Jesus endured their hostility. Heb. 12:3 tells us: "Jesus endured such hostility from sinners against Himself lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls." Jesus endured, put up with, such treatment from His enemies for my sake. They had only evil in mind.

### II-JESUS' WISDOM IS FAR SUPERIOR TO THAT OF HIS ENEMIES

A-The wisdom of Jesus was the same as that of the O.T. prophets, of John the Baptist and of the N.T. writings. They form one consistent whole. That's why He could ask a question such as He asked: "Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?" John the Baptist was a loyal preacher and teacher of Jesus Christ. He even gave his life to further Jesus' cause. His teaching and baptism were clearly of divine origin, as was the origin and teaching of Jesus. But at Lk. 7:30 we read that the Pharisees and Bible scholars rejected the plan of God when they refused to be baptized by John.

B-The wisdom of Jesus' enemies was based solely on their hateful plots, their tricks, their attempts to discredit Jesus. And so they were defeated by their own strategies. The wisdom of unbelief is blind to the truth. Jn. 8:44. It does not realize that such people are really responsible to God themselves to answer the questions: "Where did you get this authority? Who gave you this authority?" They knew the answers to these questions but stubbornly and blinded reject Him.

### III-JESUS PERMITS HIS ENEMIES TO SET TRAPS FOR THEMSELVES.

A-It is a principle of Scripture that the Lord laughs at the evil plotting of His enemies. Ps. 2:1-5 reads: "Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed (Christ), saying, 'Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.' He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure." See also Acts 4:25-28.

B-The Lord permitted these Jewish authorities to betray their own cowardice. They were afraid of Him and of the people. And those who lay traps for others will fall into their own traps. Prov. 26:27; 28:10; Ps. 7:15.16; 94:23; Dan. 6:24; Esther 7:10.

Conclusion: Jesus' Word is truth. He is the truth. We must ever be faithful to Him and His Word. Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it.

Sermon Notes for Mt. 21:28-32, Lent V (second sermon)

1. This text is found only in Mt. It is the first of Jesus' final parables. The first three (Mt. 21:28-32; Mt. 21:33-43; Mt. 22:1-14) were addressed by Jesus to His enemies in the Temple on Tuesday morning of Holy Week. The last three (Mt. 25:1-13; Mt. 25:14-30; Mt. 25:31-46) were addressed by Jesus to His disciples on the Mt. of Olives on Tuesday afternoon of the same day. The first three warn Jesus' enemies of their impenitence. The last three are about the final judgment of all men.
2. Our text, vss. 28-32, is somewhat similar to the parable of the two sons in Lk. 15 but is actually quite different.
3. Jesus' enemies were constantly plotting against Him. See 21:45; 22:15; 26:14-16. But Jesus loved them. See 23:37. Mt. 21:23-43 shows clearly that Jesus tried to bring them to repentance. But they stubbornly refused. Those who refuse to repent and believe will be lost.
4. Jesus' enemies approached Him with malicious questions at 21:23. In answer He asks them a number of questions. See vss. 25, 28, 31, 40. He wants them to give honest answers which will condemn them. Cf. II Sam. 12:1-4, where Nathan spoke a parable which condemned David. David was forced to condemn himself.
5. Some Greek manuscripts and translations invert vss. 29-30. But the meaning is clear in any case.
6. Jesus begins with the word "vineyard" in vs. 28. But it becomes clear in vs. 31 that He is speaking about the church, the kingdom of God.
7. In vss. 29-30 the two sons do the opposite of what they had promised. One refuses but later changes his mind. The other agrees but then did not go into the vineyard. The difference between the two ~~groups~~ lies in the word repentance. Both John the Baptist and Jesus came saying: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is here." Mt. 3:2; 4:17. To repent means to confess one's sin. To believe means to accept what Jesus did for the sinner. God wants us to be honest. Honest about ourselves because we have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Honest about God Who gave His only Son to save us from our sins.
8. What is the will of the Father, vs. 31? Jesus answers that question at Jn. 6:40: "This is the will of My Father that everyone who sees the son and believes in him has eternal life and I will raise him up on the last day." We pray daily "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." God truly wills all men to be saved. I Tim. 2:4.
9. The publicans and harlots confessed their sins and believed what John the Baptist said. Lk. 3:12: "The publicans (tax-collectors) came to John to be baptized and said "Teacher, what should we do?" Lk. 7:29 says: "The tax-collectors declared God righteous when they were baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and the Bible scholars rejected God's plan for them when they refused to be baptized by John."
10. John came in the way of righteousness. That means "the way to be saved." Jesus is the Way. John testified about Jesus. Jesus' enemies refused to listen to John and to be baptized by him. But the tax-collectors and harlots did repent and believe. Jesus' enemies refused to repent.
11. This parable, vss. 28-32 follows the incident recorded in vss. 23-27. Jesus' enemies thought they would trap Jesus and get the better of Him. But Jesus used the occasion to teach them an important lesson.
12. Luther's first of the ninety-five theses reads: "When our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ said: 'Repent' He meant that the whole life of the Christian be one of repentance." True. Daily we must confess our sins, believe in Jesus and produce the fruits which are in keeping with repentance. The Baptist said: "Produce fruits which are worthy of repentance." Lk. 3:8.
13. Every Sunday, especially when we go to the Lord's Supper, we say repeatedly: "Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy."

Theme: LET'S BE HONEST WITH GOD

Introduction: History is a constant replay of the Garden of Eden. Mankind in its sinfulness runs from God, tries to blame sin on others, tries to excuse itself and even boasts about its goodness. But God confronts man with his sin. He tells man: "You are going to die." God wants honesty from mankind, regret over sin, confession of sin. When that happens God heals the wounds with the Gospel. Jesus' enemies were not honest. The tax-collectors and harlots were honest. They entered God's kingdom. How is it with us? Are we honest with God?

I-THE DISHONESTY OF THE IMPENITENT

A-They make empty promises. They are like the second son in the parable. When the Lord invites them into His work they say: "Yes, Lord, we will go" but they do not go. Jesus applies that by saying: "John came to you in the way of righteousness, but you did not believe him." Mt. 3:7-10 tells us: "When John had seen many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to him to his baptism he said: 'You children of snakes, who has warned you to flee from the coming warth? Therefore, produce fruits in keeping with repentance and don't think to say in yourselves: We have Abraham as father. For I say to you that God can raise children to Abraham from these stones. Already the axe lies at the root of the trees. Every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'" They were dishonest with John. They were like the Pharisee in the temple (Lk. 18) who bragged about his own goodness. He was dishonest. They were like the Pharisees at Lk. 7:30. In their dishonesty they rejected the baptism of John.

B-They do not do the Father's will. The Father wills that everyone should see the Son and believe in Him for everlasting life. Jn. 6:40. The impenitent refuse to see the Son. They are like Cain, the brother of Abel. When God speaks with them they are dishonest. They are like King Saul. I Sam. 13-31. He promised again and again to repent but did not. In despair he committed suicide. Read the sevenfold "Woes" on the scribes and Pharisees at Mt. 23:13-31. They were dishonest with God. Their dishonesty kept others out of the kingdom. Their dishonesty showed itself in false oaths. In their dishonesty they were meticulous about tithing but were blind to mercy and faith. They were like a cup that is clean on the outside but filthy on the inside. They were like white graves on the outside but stinking bones on the inside. In their dishonesty they claimed that they would not have killed the prophets but they were plotting to kill Jesus, the greatest of the prophets.

II-THE HONESTY OF THE PENITENT

A-They regret their empty promises. They are like the first son who at first refused to go work in the vineyard but later repented and did go. They are like the people in Lk. 3:10-14 who confessed their sins, were baptized and then asked John: "What shall we do now?" John said: "Share your goods with others. Do not steal from people. Do not use your position for your own personal advantage." They are like the sinful woman at Lk. 7:36-50 who, with deep regret, confessed her sin and came to Jesus while He was a guest in the house of a Pharisee. They are like the tax-collector at Lk. 18 who smote on his breast and said "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Lk. 15:1-2 tells us: "All the tax-collectors and the sinners approached Jesus to hear Him. And the Pharisses and scribes began to grumble, saying: 'This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.'" Why did Jesus welcome them and eat with them? They were honest. They confessed their sins and sinfulness.

B-They do the Father's will. The Father wills that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. I Tim. 2:4. The Father wills that everyone should see the Son, believe in Him, and have everlasting life. Jn. 6:40. The Father wills that believers produce fruits which prove repentance. Lk. 3:8. How is it with us? Are we honest with God?

Sermon Notes on Mt. 21:33-43, Lent V (third sermon)

1. This parable is paralleled at Mk. 12:1-12 and Lk. 20:9-19. Mt. 21:23 to 22:14 form a unit. Jesus' enemies asked him a question. He countered with a question and then spoke three parables: a) the two sons; b) the vineyard; c) the wedding feast. From parable to parable Jesus grows more intense in warning His enemies to repent and believe in Him.
2. Our parable is very similar to Is. 5:1-7. In both cases the vineyard is the Jewish theocracy. In both they rejected God's wonderful blessings. Is. 5:1-7 speaks of the fruitlessness of all of Israel. Mt. 21:33-41 stresses the rebellion of Israel's leaders.
3. Vs. 33 shows how God did everything for Israel beginning with Moses in about 1500 B.C. to John the Baptist. The servants in vss. 34 and 36 represent the prophets from about 900 B.C. till about 600 B.C., thirteen prophets from Elijah to Obadiah. During the exile came two more, Daniel and Ezekiel. After the exile, 520-400 B.C. there were three more. And, finally there was John the Baptist. Israel was hateful to all the prophets. The son in vss. 37-39 is Jesus Christ, God's beloved Son. The Jews treated Him worse than all the prophets. Vs. 41 foretells two things in history: a) the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. when the Jews were scattered all over the world, and b) Pentecost, when the Gospel was extended to the Gentiles. Only in vs. 41 is it said that the people gave God the fruits of the vineyard. Very likely in vs. 43 the elect among both the Jews and the Gentiles will produce the fruits of the kingdom of God.
4. In vs. 40 the Lord of the Vineyard is God Himself. Jesus asks the people what God will do to these wicked farmers. The people themselves answer the question. They pronounced their own judgment.
5. Then in vs. 42 Jesus quotes a Messianic prophecy from Ps. 118:22. The builders rejected the stone which later became the cornerstone of the building. This means: the Jews rejected Christ, the Cornerstone of the Church. Read Eph. 2:20. This is amazing to us. The thought is similar to Gen. 50:20 and Rom. 8:28. They cursed Jesus but He became a blessing to mankind. Gal. 3:13.
6. In vs. 43 we have Jesus' final Word of judgment. Though the Jews rejected the Son of God, others will produce the fruits of the Spirit. Gal. 5:22-23.
7. How did the chief priests and Pharisees react? Did they repent? Nyet! They wanted to arrest Him but feared the people. Vs. 46.
8. The parable of the wicked farmers, vss. 33-41, is purposely contrary to nature. No landowner would endure the rebellion of his tenants for generations as is pictured in this parable. In this way Jesus pictures the long-suffering of God. While Noah was building the ark, God waited 120 years before He sent the flood. I Pet. 3:20. Likewise God waited patiently with Israel for 1500 years. Read II Pet. 3, the entire chapter. The Lord is still long-suffering. Scoffers make fun of the Lord's long-suffering. But the believer knows that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation. Vs. 15 of II Pet. 3.
9. The parable of the two sons, vss. 28-32, and our parable, vss. 33-43, are similar but also different. In both parables Jesus scolds the spiritual leaders in Israel. But the first parable speaks only of Jesus' time. The second parable speaks of the past, present and future of Israel. In the first parable Jesus compares the self-satisfied leaders with the repentant tax-collectors and harlots. But in the second parable Jesus pictures the rejection of the leaders and their followers. In the first parable Jesus pictures their attitude to the Baptist, in the second their attitude to Jesus Himself. Their wickedness becomes rebellion.
10. The people mistreated the prophets because they rejected their Word. The leaders killed Jesus because they feared to lose their positions. Read Mt. 23:37 and Jn. 11:48.
11. The Jews correctly condemned themselves (Mt. 21:41; Lk. 20:16). But then they plotted His death (Mt. 21:46; Lk. 20:19). They sinned in spite of better knowledge.

## Sermon Outline on Mt. 21:33-43, Lent V (third sermon)

### Theme: THE LONGSUFFERING OF GOD

Introduction: Throughout the history of the world people have despised the longsuffering of the Lord. Read II Pet. 3. The people at Noah's time despised God's longsuffering. They perished. Today people despise the longsuffering of the Lord. But judgment day will come. The Jews of Jesus' time despised God's longsuffering. How about us?

#### I-HOW GOD'S LONGSUFFERING SHOWS ITSELF

A-He does everything for mankind. The description of the Vineyard in Is. 5:1-7 and Mt. 21:33 is a picture of how God has done everything for man's salvation. God prepared every detail of the vineyard and then gave it to man. In Christ God justified all men. Rom. 5:19. In Christ God reconciled all people to Himself. II Cor. 5:19. In Christ God took away the sins of the world. Jn. 1:29. Christ became a curse for all people. Gal. 3:13. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. Jn. 3:16. That's what the preparation of the vineyard in our text pictures.

B-He sends His prophets and ministers to tell people about this. Gen. 6 and following describes how God sent Noah to the people of his time to warn them of the great flood which was coming. His preaching lasted for 120 years until the flood came. II Pet. 2:5. God sent Moses to the children of Israel in about 1500 B.C. to teach the people. From 900 B.C. to 400 B.C. (500 years) God sent eighteen prophets to give them God's Word. In the N.T. God has sent the apostles to give the world the Word of God. In all times of history God's prophets have been saying: "Come for all things are now ready." Mt. 22:4. At Rom. 10:18 Paul asks: "They haven't all heard, have they?" And Paul answers: "Oh yes, indeed they have." And then he quotes Ps. 18:5 which reads: "Their sound has gone out into all the world. And to the ends of the world their words have come."

#### II-HOW PEOPLE REACT TO THE LONGSUFFERING OF THE LORD

A-Many reject it and are lost. Read II Pet. 3:1-7. The people in Noah's day scoffed at the longsuffering of God. They said that there was not going to be a flood since all things were continuing as they had been. Our text, Mt. 21:33-43 describes how Israel, in the O.T., scoffed at the longsuffering of God. Read Mt. 23:37 where Jesus in one verse describes the attitude of Israel in the O.T. toward the prophets. Prophet after prophet came warning them to repent of their sins and believe the Gospel. But what did they do? Read vss. 34-36. They rejected, mistreated and killed the prophets, including John the Baptist. Finally God sent His only begotten Son. That is described in vss. 37-39. What did God do to them? Read vss. 41-43. God took the vineyard, the kingdom of God, from them and gave it to the Gentiles. He also took their country away from them. Israel is trying to regain its country but they suffer endless war. But many Gentiles, too, play with the longsuffering of God. They treat God, His Word and His preachers like the people of Noah, the Jews of the O.T. and the Jews of Jesus' day treated God. What will God do? Read II Pet. 3:10. Judgment day will find them unprepared.

B-What are we to do? First of all, we must be warned by the examples of the people in the O.T. and those of Jesus' time. We must do what the Baptist and Jesus told the people: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." We must listen to II Pet. 3:11-15. Since the last day is approaching we must live holy lives, looking forward to the last day, looking forward to the new heaven and the new earth, always remembering that the Lord's patience and longsuffering is our salvation. The Lord is patiently waiting for our repentance. He is waiting for us to produce the fruits of faith. Gal. 5:22-23.

Sermon Notes on Jn. 8:46-59, Lent V

1. Jn. 7:11 to 10:21 happened at the Festival of Tabernacles only about six months before His death and resurrection.
2. Jn. 8:30-59 is a major passage on the Word of God. Vss. 31-32 tell us that the Word makes a man a disciple of Jesus, teaches him Truth and makes him free. Vs. 37 tells us that the Word takes away the lust for murder. Vs. 43 tells us that the Word causes a person to recognize Jesus' characteristic way of speaking. Vs. 45 tells us that the Word causes those hard of heart to reject Jesus. Vs. 47 tells us that the Word causes a man to be of God. And vs. 51 tells us that the Word frees a person from eternal death. The whole passage shows us that the Word gives a person a proper understanding of the Bible.
3. Put another way: Vss. 30-36 show us that Truth and Freedom are found only in the Word of God. Vss. 37-47 show us that the true children of Abraham love Christ, hear His Word and believe in Him. But the illegitimate children of Abraham reject Christ, are not of God and are ruled by sin and Satan. Vss. 48-59 show us that the true children of Abraham rejoice in the coming of Jesus in the flesh and they know that they will not experience eternal death.
4. The NT always makes clear that Jesus made every effort to bring His enemies to faith and everlasting life. Despite their insults and hatred He speaks beautiful Gospel in vs. 51.
5. The Bible does not describe the fall of Satan or its cause. That is incomprehensible to us. But it does describe the character and works of Satan and how to be delivered from him and his power.
6. The Formula of Concord says: "Scripture denies to the intellect, heart, and will of the natural man every capacity, aptitude, skill, and ability to think anything good or right in spiritual matters, to understand them, to begin them, to will them, to undertake them, to do them, to accomplish or to cooperate in them as of himself." The Word of God is our only hope.
7. In vs. 40 Jesus speaks of Abraham as a man of good works. Here cf. James 2:21. In vs. 56 Jesus speaks of Abraham as a man of faith. Here cf. Rom. 4 where he is called the father of all believers. Like Abraham, Christians are people of faith and good works. Jesus' enemies lacked both faith and good works.
8. Truth comes only from the Triune God in the Word. It is an everlasting power, the very essence of God Himself. Falsehood is the devil's invention of untruth and unreality. It lasts only a moment. Satan's children are always asking: "Who am I?" "What am I?" "Where am I going?" All is uncertain. But God's children know who and what they are and where they are going. They are certain.
9. If you wish to know what Satan is like, look at unconverted mankind which is controlled by Satan. Like Satan, unconverted man is controlled by falsehood, delusion and uncertainty.
10. Vss. 51 and 55 have the verb "to keep, to observe" in common. In 51 it is used of the believer who guards himself against the perversion of the Truth. In vs. 55 it is used of Jesus Who defends us against the attacks of Satan.
11. In vs. 37 Jesus agrees that the Jews were children of Abraham, but only physically. Abraham believed in the Christ Who was coming. See vs. 56. He believed that Jesus was true God and true man. The enemies of Jesus did not believe this. Therefore they were not truly the children of Abraham. The unbelieving Jews today are not truly the children of Abraham. But Christians are Abraham's children. See Rom. 2:28-29 and Php. 3:3. Paul says: "We are the circumcision who serve the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and do not trust in the flesh." Jesus' enemies trusted only in the flesh, themselves.
12. Vs. 50 shows us why Jesus was never resentful when He was insulted. Also vs. 54. Cf. this to the attitude of His enemies who sought only the glory of people.

Theme: FALSEHOOD AND TRUTH

Intr oduction: Vss. 44 and 45 tell us that Satan is the father of unbelievers and causes his children to lie and kill. But we are also told that Jesus speaks Truth, the Word of God. He repeats that in vs. 47 and also tells us that His children are of God because they hear the Word of God. Let us talk about falsehood and truth.

#### I- THE FATHER OF FALSEHOOD AND HIS CHILDREN

- A- The father of falsehood. Vs. 44 tells us that the devil did not abide in the truth and that there is no truth in him. In the Garden of Eden the devil approached Adam and Eve with lies. To them the lies seemed preferable to the truth and they fell into sin. Ever since then the devil has been going about seeking those whom he might devour. Think of the story of Job. Think of what he did to Judas. He is the god of this world. He is the prince of darkness. He promises good things but never gives them. He is the author of delusion. He makes people believe lies. They are not what they think they are. He even appears as an angel of light. II Cor. 11:14.
- B- The children of Satan. They are the slaves of sin. Read vss. 30-36. The Jews thought that mere descent from Abraham guarded them from evil. But Jesus tells them that only the Son (Jesus) can free them from their slavery to sin. The children of Satan are murderous and do Satan's works. Read vss. 37-45. These Jews wanted to kill Jesus because He said that He was the Son of God. The children of Satan do not hear the Word of God. Read vs. 47. Children of Satan refuse to hear God's Word. They use all kinds of excuses. They delude themselves into thinking that they are good enough as they are. Children of Satan might even call Jesus a devil. See vss. 48-52. But, worst of all, the children of falsehood and Satan will not agree that Jesus is true God and true man. Abraham, the father of believers, looked forward to the coming of Jesus. See vs. 56. The children of Satan hate this truth. And they refuse to repent of their sin.

#### II- THE AUTHOR OF TRUTH AND HIS CHILDREN

- A- The author of truth. Jesus once said: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Jn. 14:6. Luther once said: "Whatever is not of the Word of God and the sacraments is of the devil." True. What is that Truth? Vs. 51 tells us: "Truly, truly I say to you 'If anyone keeps My Word he will not experience death forever'." Jesus offers forgiveness of sins and everlasting life in His Word. He came to seek and save that which is lost. His sheep hear His voice and follow Him and He gives them everlasting life. No one can take the believer out of Jesus' hand. Our text tells us that He had no sin. He did not seek His own glory and fame. He existed before Abraham was born. He even loves those who want to kill him.
- B- The children of truth. Jesus says in vss. 31-32: "If you continue in My Word, you will know the Truth and the Truth will make you free. Children of truth, believers in Christ, are free from the guilt and power of sin, the power of Satan and the fear of death. They are still sinners, but they are forgiven sinners. Children of truth are children of Abraham, the father of believers. Rom. 4:1-12. Abraham was a sinner but he also believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. Gal. 3:6-9. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are now in the kingdom of heaven. Lk. 13:28.

Conclusion: Jesus is inviting you today just as He invited the Jews.

He says: "Come unto Me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Mt. 11:28. John the Baptist said: "Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world." And in our text He says: "If anyone observes My Word he will not see eternal death." He is the resurrection and the life. Believe Him and be saved.