

The Way of Jesus – For or Against (Part 2) Luke 13-17

Last Sunday we talked about being known for what we are “for”, more than what we are “against”. This is so critical for the health and stability of the Church... as well as for the advancement of the gospel!

Jesus wants us to prioritize what unites us together, over what divides us & tries to separate us as God’s people! **Jesus prayed for this... so should we!**

But what are the things that we should actually be “for” ... that we should unite together around as we follow Jesus? It’s not just about being “for” Jesus... Being a fan... **There are distinguishing marks of the “Jesus Way!”**

Consider what we just recite together from the Belgic Confession Article 29... the distinguishing mark of a Christian is - “faith” displayed by “fleeing from sin and pursuing righteousness.” This is the fruit of one who has “received the one and only Savior, Jesus Christ.” So what 2 things is Jesus “for” here?

We just sang, “Come to the table”... & we declared all who are welcome... But what does the rest of the chorus say? **“Come join the sinners who have been redeemed.”** All are welcome, but only redeemed sinners are present!

The Heidelberg Catechism Q 81 asks, “Who are to come to the Lord’s table?” **“Those who are displeased with themselves because of their sins, but who nevertheless trust that their sins are pardoned and that their continuing weakness is covered by the suffering and death of Christ, and who also desire more and more to strengthen their faith and to lead a better life...”**

There is **definition** to walking together in unity in the “Jesus Way!”

Jesus invites us, but He also defines for us what following Him looks like! Are we “for” the things that Jesus was/is for? Is He both Savior & Lord...

Jesus came to do the will of His Father. That’s the “Jesus Way!” But is that the way we live our lives? **Is God’s Word our ultimate authority, or just an influence or suggestive voice?** The Jesus Way is God’s Way... the Bible Way!

Our readings, through the gospels, this past week focused in on **Luke 13-17**. These chapters reveal much about the Father’s will, & the “Jesus Way.” They tell us several things that Jesus was “for”... Are we in alignment with Him?

- 1) **There’s an urgency to repentance**... Because our time here is short!
Luke 13:1-5 - “Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

The barren fig tree – **Luke 13:6-9**. God is patient, but the open door of

salvation is not indefinite! The Father is not to be tested in this way!

Jesus was/is “for” an urgent response to the gospel! What about us?

- 2) **The Kingdom of God is not bound by the ways of man!**
 - Jesus heals a woman on the Sabbath (**Luke 10:10-14**)
 - Guests are told to take the lowest seats (**Luke 14:7-11**)
 - The poor are invited to the banquet (**Luke 14:12-24**)
 - Lazarus is comforted, the rich man is tormented (**Luke 16:19-31**)
 - A Samaritan is the only grateful leper (**Luke 17:11-19**)

The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed & yeast (**Luke 13:18-21**)...

Jesus was/is “for” a Kingdom that is not of this world! Are we?

- 3) **There is a cost to discipleship!** Discipleship is not a casual affiliation -it is total allegiance! Salvation is free... but discipleship costs us everything!
 - Family... our own life... (**Luke 14:25-26**)
 - Bear our own cross... (**Luke 14:27**)

Jesus was/is “for” those who count the cost of following Him & renounce all to be His disciples! The Jesus way is not easy believe-ism! (Luke 14:28,33)

- 4) **Jesus came to seek and to save the lost!**
 - Lost sheep, Lost coin, Lost son (**Luke 15**)

Jesus was/is “for” those who are sick & in need of a doctor... lost/found!
How much do we really care about those who are far from God?
What are we willing to do to see the lost found?

- 5) **“Pay attention to yourselves...” (Luke 17:3)** How much thought do we give to how we are living our lives between the “already” and “not yet”?

“If your brother sins, rebuke him... and if he repents, forgive him... & if he sins against you seven times, & turns to you seven times, saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.” (Luke 17:3-4)

Jesus was/is “for” taking sin seriously... But He is also “for” extending forgiveness freely, just as it’s been freely extended to us thru repentance
This is the gospel... This is the will of the Father... This is the Jesus way...

Lent is a time for reflection... repentance... & preparation... We remember Jesus’ 40 days in the wilderness... His triumph in the midst of our defeat... We reflect on Jesus’ extension of forgiveness despite our unworthiness... May we see “the Jesus Way” ... during this season of preparation for Easter!

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