

I Am the Voice

Sunday, February 5, 2023

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Straight Paths Bible Church

John 1:19-23 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

- I. First, we find the high religious authorities seeking information from a man who is not one of them, and outside of their religious system without their oversight or guidance.
 - A. This has been the common theme among all the prophets of God.
 - B. None of the prophets were rebels against authority, trying to carve out their own religion and trying to persuade others to follow them.
 - C. Neither was John of that stripe; what he was doing was not in rebellion to the concerning religious authority and the order of worship and service that God himself had established.
 - 1. It was God who established the Levitic priesthood.
 - 2. John's mission and purpose was not to destroy or pull down the reigning religious heirarchy.
 - D. When pressed about who he was he described himself and his whole purpose as "the voice" of one crying in the wilderness.
 - E. This was the same with all the prophets; they had a message for the people from God and they were bound to speak it, to verbalize it, to ring their eardrums with the message they had received from God.
 - F. John was a prophet, but he was more than a prophet because he was sent to introduce the world to the Savior in person.
 - G. It was the sound of John's voice that was heard when he said, "Behold! The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."
- II. A "voice" is the communication of words.
 - A. A voice is utterance and the articulation of words.
 - B. A voice can be audible to the ears, but there are voices that are heard only in the mind.
 - 1. We all hear voices all the time that speak to our mind without coming through our ears.
 - 2. The Spirit of God speaks, guides, and comforts those in whom He dwells.
 - 3. Spirits of devils also try to communicate to our minds questioning truth and trying to deceive us through our feelings and pride and selfish lusts.
 - C. We cannot hear John the Baptist's voice this morning with our ears, but we most certainly can hear his voice.
 - 1. We can hear the voices of loved ones who have gone on, but only in our minds; they cannot literally speak to us audibly from where they are now.
- III. A voice means there is a message, or something to communicate.

- A. Animals make sounds; growls, screeches, whistles, moans, barks, howls, chirps, and many other sounds, but they are without a message, at least to people and other animals.
 - 1. Their “voice” only makes known their presence, and only sometimes precedes or makes known what they are about to do.
- B. A “voice” like John is referring to here, is that which communicates thoughts, reason, and facts.
- C. “A voice crying” demands our immediate attention; it cannot be ignored without a great effort to do so.
 - 1. A voice “crying in the wilderness” is much harder to ignore.
- D. God sent John to be a voice; a literal audible voice of a man to announce and introduce the Savior of mankind to the world.
- E. He did it because people need to HEAR the Word; they need to hear someone say it.
- F. The Word has much more force when it is spoken.
 - 1. Anyone can be in the presence of a Bible, or own a dozen of them, and leave them lying on a shelf or out in the open, and be completely unaffected by what it says, because it has no voice of its own.
 - 2. But when someone opens it, reads it aloud and puts a voice to it, it cannot be ignored.

[Psalm 68:11 The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.](#)

To publish means: to announce:—messenger, preach, publish, shew forth, tell.

PUBLISHED, pp. Made known to the community; divulged; promulgated; proclaimed.

IV. So who was John the Baptist?

- A. He was a “voice” crying in the wilderness. “Make straight the way of the Lord.”
- B. He did not consider himself to be anything but a voice representing God to people who were in darkness.
- C. This was the manner of all the prophets that came before him.
- D. They were not revolutionaries or seditionists, but were simply calling men to repentance and faith in the true God of heaven.
- E. That was what set them apart from the contemporary mainline religion of their day, which had abandoned the true way of the Lord and ceased to cry out against sin and demanded no repentance.
- F. The Pharisees in sending the priests and Levites to John had the same motive as Herod’s wicked mistress, and that was to silence the voice.
- G. This is the same wickedness that we find today in sinners who live after their lusts, or proud religious people who are guarding their religious cover for their sin – to silence that voice that is telling them they are wrong and must repent.
- H. This is why it is so hard to get people to come to church and listen to the Word of God preached, or to get them to hear in the workplace, or on the street.
 - 1. They will flee from the voice.
- I. John’s voice was very effective because it was animated by the Spirit of God.
- J. Let us always be the same as John when we open our mouths and our voice is heard, let it be governed and filled with Spirit of God, so that it is hard for sinners to flee from it, but easy for them to come to it.

[Colossians 4:6 Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.](#)