

Christ in Conflict

I. Announce:

- A. Slide1 Kelly: Mothers Day
- B. Slide2 Real Tues: this Tues, fun night of fellowship, w/*Brenda Leavenworth*/Reliance).
- C. Slide3 Children at Risk (next Sun. Rancho Damacitas will share about **their goal** to break *the cycle of abuse & poverty* by empowering *at-risk, single moms w/young children, &* individuals w/a history of foster care or child abuse).
- D. Slide4 Baptism Class (1 more class details on flyer in info booth).
- E. Slide5 The Stir Musicians Fellowship (this Sat, back at church, all skill levels welcome).
- F. Slide6 Every Mind Matters (Wed Nite May 29th, Kay Warren from Saddleback church. Share on mental health awareness, & the hope & support that is available).

II. Slide7 Intro: Christ in Conflict

- A. Do you know where you are **going** in life? *Or*, What's **Gods direction** is for your life?
 1. The **religious leaders** in Jesus' day didn't know where **they** were going, **nor** where **Jesus'** was going...we call it being **in the dark**.
 2. **They had:** the light of **the Law** (5) & the light of **conscience** (9) **but** they did not have **the light of life** (12).
- B. **Background:** the Jewish **Feast of Tabernacles** just finished.
- C. **Setting:** the **Temple Treasury** (located near the **Court of the Women**, so named because the woman could enter this part of the Temple).
- D. **Backdrop:** At night during the week, the priests lit **4 large candelabra's/menorah** in the court of the women, & the glow from the light could be seen across the city.¹
 1. It spoke of **the pillar of fire by night** during their wanderings in the wilderness.
 2. **Thus** It is with this **strong visual backdrop** Jesus makes this next claim, vs.12. *Maybe the lights were still burning?* (8:2).
 - a) *Or even more spectacular* if it was just **after** the feast & the illumination no longer took place. **The contrast** between **light/darkness** would have been *equally impressive*

¹ Warren Wiersbe, Jesus in the Present Tense.

3. Jesus wanted them to have **lasting blessing** *in the present tense*. God was willing **every day** to give them **the water of life** & **the light of life**...**Himself**.
4. It is with this **strong visual backdrop** Jesus makes this next claim, vs.12.
5. Jesus desires to **guide** His followers: His **words** being a lamp to our feet & light to our path. His **life** being a lamp to our feet & light to our path.

E. **Israel** was supposed to be the light of the world; but Israel was providing only *darkness*.

1. If **Jesus** was now *shining the true light* into that darkness, there could only be one result: **a head-on clash**. That is what we find here...

F. **Slide8** Ch.8 *Christ in Conflict* is a series of 4 debates, or 4 important **contrasts**: (we'll look at 3) *Light & Darkness. Heaven & Earth. Freedom & Slavery*. [Child of God & Child of Satan]

III. Slide9a **LIGHT & DARKNESS (12-20)**

A. **Slide9b** A few things first: in vs.30 *many believed* (thats really **good news**). In vs.24 (tells how you believe) *unless you believe that I Am*. In vs.20 (tells us where they are) *temple treasury*. In vs.12 (tells us what started all this) *Jesus claiming, I Am the Light of the World*.

B. **Slide9c** (12) **I am** the *Light of the world* - The **2nd** of the *I Am* statements.

C. Remember from our I Am series last year: There are **23** **Ἐγώ εἰμι** statements in John. **7** are followed by a *metaphor*. The grammar structure is reversed *The Light of the world it is I*.

1. This is **Jesus** in the **Present Tense**. This is **Jesus**, not as a distant deity but as the **living God**, *the great I AM*, **one** with God the Father.

D. God's **1st spoken words**. God's **1st noun**. God's **1st creative word**...produced *Light*.

1. **Light** comes from God. And its creation was an **immediate victory**, because it *dispelled darkness*.
2. **Slide9d** **Darkness** speaks of death, ignorance, & sin; **Light** speaks of life, knowledge, & holiness.²

E. **Note**: Jesus claims to be **the** light of the world not **a** light.

² Warren Wiersbe; Outlines of NT; Jn.8.

1. Slide9e Though the **claim** is **exclusive**, the **offer** is **inclusive** - an offer any and all could respond to.
- F. *Just as Jesus* did not **reflect** His glory, **but revealed His glory**, as it came from **within**.
1. **So Jesus** does not **reflect** light, **but revealed His light**, it came from **within**.
 - a) Slide9f *God **is** Light and in Him is no darkness at all* (i.e. holiness). 1Jn.1:5
- G. **Light of Life** - **Or, the light that gives life. Or, the light that leads to life. The light that causes people to really live. The light that shows people how they may live.**³
1. Wait, how does **light** lead to **life**?
 2. Because once you **have the light**, there is **no more groping in darkness**, **but now** you can **see the right way to go**. *The eyes of your heart are opened, & **divine light** streams into our **living spirits**.* Piper
 3. You cannot see w/o light. Everything looks different in the light of Christ. Mountains & valleys, means & rivers, animals & people, even tsunamis & suffering & death look different.
 - a) *Jesus shines a soft glow* to comfort us in our lonely room **after a devastating loss**.
 - b) *He will be a lamp* on our **troubled path**.
 - c) *He will reveal* the wise & loving face of God *behind* every **frowning providence**.
- H. *Jesus the light of life...*Some people change their ways when they **see the light**, Others only when they **feel the heat**. Your choice :)
- I. Slide10a Note when we **follow** Him, we **have** Him (12).
1. Following Jesus is more than **tagging along behind Him**. It's following Him for **who He is**. It's being so taken in by Him that you **join yourself to Him**.
 2. Slide10b When you **follow** Him you **have** Him. I am yours. *I am your **Shepherd**, and your **Sacrifice**, and your **Living Water**, and your **Bread from heaven**, and your **God**, and your **Light**.* [don't follow, u **do** walk in darkness. **Jesus or darkness**, no 3rd alternative. **No other light**]

³ USB Handbook: John (Logos Jn.8:12 note)

J. At least 7 times in this passage, Jesus points to the fact that... He is **from** the Father, **and** **speaks on the authority** of the Father, **and** is **going to** the Father, **and** **does nothing on his own**. He claims, in other words, that his authority is *not from any human origin*.

1. Slide10c He claims, *I speak from God and for God and as God. Unless you believe I Am.*

IV. Slide11a HEAVEN & EARTH (21-30)

- A. Slide11b There are **2 births**: **from above** (*born again* by God's Sp) & **from this world** (born of the *flesh*)
- B. There are **2 ways to die**: the **sinner** dies *in his sins*, but the **believer** dies *in the Lord* (Rev.14:13 **Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on**)
- C. (23,24) Some people are offended at a physicians **bluntness**, but here **Dr. Jesus** gets right down to the diagnosis: *It's terminal cancer & w/o radical surgery, you're going to die.*
- D. Slide11c (26-29) Jesus told the Jews that *He came from heaven*. The Father **sent Him** (26); The Father **taught Him** (28); The Father **remained with Him** (29).
 1. The only time the Father was **not with Him**, was when *Christ was made sin* for us on the cross.
- E. (28) **Lift up** - which means of course *the crucifixion*.

V. Slide12a FREEDOM & SLAVERY (31-36)

- A. Slide12b (31) **Abide** - Jesus was saying, *your future loyalty to my teaching will prove the reality of your present profession*.
 1. We accept folks into the body of Christ on **profession of trust in Christ**; Continuance in the word/teachings **proves the sincerity or insincerity** of the Slide12c profession. It is the **acid test** of life.⁴ [the acid test of *spiritual* life]
- B. Slide13a (32) **Truth** - His teachings should be accepted as **absolute truth**.
 1. **Absolute truth is defined as inflexible reality: fixed, invariable, unalterable facts.** *For example, it is a fixed, invariable, unalterable fact that there are absolutely no square circles and there are absolutely no round squares.*
 - a) Gravity. 2+2=4. *There is no absolute truth...* is self-refuting (bel that absolutely?)

⁴ A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the NT, Vol.5, pg.149.

2. Many *philosophies & ideologies* claim to be based on truth, but the truth Jesus is speaking of here is **not assent** to a proposition, but trust *in Jesus Himself* who said, *I am the way, the truth & the life.*
 3. *Slide13b* The Word of God does not claim to *just contain* truth, but **is truth**. It is not **simply true**, but **is truth itself**.
 - a) *Why is this important?* cuz there is **no higher standard** of truth to compare it by. *The bible itself is the **final standard of truth.***
 - b) *Slide13c* Jesus doesn't say, **Your Word is true**, in Jn.17:17, but **Your Word is truth**.
- C. **Note:** the *condition* on this freedom/liberation - if you **abide in My word**, you'll experience this liberation. **[You must hold to His teachings]**
1. Not just **know** the truth but must **live** the truth.
- D. (33) What did the Pharisees **lack**, which prevented them from recognizing the truth of Jesus' words? *They lacked...*
1. (19) **Knowing who Jesus was**, thus lacked the knowledge of the Father.
 2. (23) **The right birth** (they were **from beneath/of this world**. i.e. worldly/fleshly only)
 3. (24) **Believing in Jesus**.
 4. (33) **Knowing they were in bondage**.
- E. The Jews felt they were *free-men* because Abraham was their father. **[not enslaved?]**
1. *Slide14* Uhh what about to *the Egyptians, & to Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, &* right at that very time...they were **in bondage** to the *Roman Empire*. Oh and then there is the **Law**. And of course to *the world the flesh & the devil*
 2. **All unsaved people are not free but are enslaved by sin.**
 - a) Sometimes **invisible chains** are *stronger than* metal chains. Like Human Trafficking when it comes to *threats, force, fraud or coercion*. **The threat**, you can run away *but I will go get your younger sister*.
 - b) So the unbeliever has **invisible chains** of **sin or the self** that won't die (self-importance, self-confidence, etc). *Your old nature pimping out your you.*

c) It is a slavery that grips **not only** individuals **but also** groups, nations and families of nations. It is the slavery we know as **sin**.

F. Christ is speaking about **spiritual bondage & liberty**. [*not* physical or political]

1. The lost sinner is in bondage to **lusts & sins**. *Titus 3:3-7*
2. The lost sinner is in bondage to **the world system & the devil**.
 - a) By receiving the **truth** in Christ, **spiritual slaves** are **set free**.

G. The **Son** makes you free (36) **so trust Him & follow Him**.

The **Truth** makes you free (32) **so study it, believe it, obey it**.

1. The **Savior** has set us free from **sin**. The **Son** sets us free from **myself**.
2. It is what Paul meant in when he said, *I have been crucified with Christ...*
3. Paul's *individuality* had been broken & his spirit had been united with his Lord; **not just merged** into Him, **but made one with** Him.

H. **You shall be free indeed** - **Free** to the **very core** of your being. **Free** from the **inside out**.

I. **Slide15a** We've all seen **elephants** tied up with that **small chain** that he could easily pull out of the ground. They have the **power** but they **don't budge**. **Why?** because they've been taught as baby elephants "*when you feel this chain on your leg, you have no power, you're nothing, you're nothing*" & so, you don't move. Because you're not here to demonstrate your power but here to perform.

1. **Sounds like us Christians**. We show up at church, or in life, **not to demonstrate our power but we show up just to perform**.
2. We have/show **no power** in our lives. **We walk around with a chain on our leg**.
3. We must say, **In the name of Jesus, chain get off me**. Let me go!
Slide15b Chain get off me. I'm free. **And he who the Son sets free, is free indeed**.
4. **You're free. Walk like it. Talk like it. Act like it.**
5. **Are you free? Did Jesus make you free?** Then hold up your head and be free.

J. **End:** Mothers, please pick up your **Candle Gift** we have for you (4 tables). **Joy or Peace**.