



January 28, 2007

They Said So

As we begin our fourth sermon in our Epiphany series in this Epiphany season we again remember that Epiphany means, “to make known” and the very sermon was on Epiphany Sunday when we celebrated the wise men coming to see Jesus. It was very significant because the wise men were gentiles and we see that the gospel is now being made manifest or being made known to the gentile people. Then we began our sermon series of dealing with Jesus being made known and how He is being made known as the Messiah. In that first sermon we heard about His first miracle changing water into wine. A physical impossibility, something that only God can do.

Then last week we looked at the claims of Christ where he claimed to be God. Saying things like “I Am” and using the words from the burning bush for that “I am”. We also saw Him boldly saying that He is the Messiah. Things like in John 4:25-26 when speaking to the woman at the well. She says to Him, “I know that Messiah called Christ is coming. When He comes he will explain everything to us.” And then Jesus declares, “I who speak to you am He.” Could it be any bolder? John 9:35-37 Jesus has healed the blind man and the blind man has been removed from the synagogue. Jesus heard that they had thrown him out when he found him he said, “Do you believe in the son of man?” “Who is he sir?” the blind man asked, “tell me so that I may believe in him”. Jesus said, “you have now seen him, in fact He is the one speaking with you”. B

But today we look at another way of seeing that Jesus truly is the Messiah. To set the stage we are going to look at our gospel this morning Luke 4:22-30. Jesus has just claimed that today the scripture is being fulfilled and you’re hearing and all the people spoke well of Him and they were amazed. But why were they amazed? The key is right there isn’t this Joseph’s son? They are amazed that a carpenter’s son can speak well and were amazed and Jesus knows this. He knows this nagging thing in their mind how can this

carpenter's son be doing that? He calls them on it he says, "surely you will quote this Proverb to me physician heal yourself". In other words do an impossible thing, they're saying we want a miracle and then he brings it out even more and says, "Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did Capernaum". That was where he changed the water into wine. Christ understands it; they want a miracle. Why? Because they can't believe that the hometown boy is the Messiah. So then Jesus give them a little bit of truth he says, " I tell you the truth no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time and the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land but Elijah was not sent any of them. But to a widow and there were many in Israel with Leprosy in the time of Elijah yet not one of them was cleansed; only Naaman the Assyrian." The point of what Jesus is saying is people have a hard time seeing something great in one of their own because they know where that person came from in this case from a carpenter's family and when

God uses ordinary people to be messengers of redemption the hometown people don't accept them. Just like they didn't accept Elijah, that's when God sends them to the gentiles. Jesus' point is I am the Messiah I bring redemption you should listen to me. What's their reaction? All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up drove Him out of the town and took Him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built and ordered to throw Him down the cliff. The reaction is to kill Him. Why? What did he say that was so wrong? It's because he's claiming to be the Messiah. This would be blasphemy he's claiming to be God. You don't kill people especially at this time. The Jewish leaders would look down on it they were frown mightily its breaking the commandments but they'll accept it if you're killing someone because of blasphemy. Likewise, the Romans, who took a very hard line on killing, will look the other way if you killed them because of blasphemy. So, today what we're going to do is look at the reaction of Jesus' enemies because sometimes the enemies will make very clear what He said. Sometimes people will say maybe Jesus didn't mean that or we're misquoting but if He claims to be the Messiah and His very own enemies pick it up and they try to kill Him obviously He is claiming to be the Messiah and not something much simpler.

We go to John 7:25-30 at that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, "Isn't this the man they're trying to kill. Here

He is speaking publicly and they're not saying a word to Him. Have the authorities really concluded that He is the Christ? But we know where He is from when the Christ come no one will know where He is from." The Jesus still teaching in the temple courts cried out, "yes, you know me, you know where I am from. I am not here on my own He who sent me is true. You do not know Him but I know Him because I am from Him and He sent me". Now who is this that He's saying He's from? He's saying He's from God. He's saying He's the Christ. What's their reaction and how do we know this is what He was saying? At this they tried to seize Him but no one laid a hand on Him. His time had not yet come. They seized Him to kill Him it was blasphemy.

Last week we heard on of the "I Ams" from John 8:58-59, "I tell you the truth", Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born I am". The very next verse, "they picked up stones to stone Him". But Jesus hid Himself slipping away from the temple grounds. Earlier I read that the blind man wanted to know who the messiah was and Jesus said, "The one you are speaking with right know I am Him". But why was the blind man there talking with Him? He was thrown out of the synagogue, why? Go a couple verses earlier John 9:22, "His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews for all already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the synagogue". For them to make a rule that if someone acknowledged Jesus was the Christ it must mean that Jesus was claiming He was the Christ and people were following Him. The enemies are showing Jesus said it.

John 10:30-33, "I and the Father are one". Their reaction? Again the Jews picked up stones to stone Him. You might say ok you've already made that point but still I don't believe that that's why they were doing it. Let me continue that verse, "But Jesus said to them I have shown you many great miracles from the father for which of these do you stone me?" "We are not stoning you for any of these", replied the Jews, "But for blasphemy because you a mere man claim to be God". Again John 10:38-39, Jesus speaking He said, "But if I do it even though you do not believe me believe the miracles that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am the Father". Their response again they try to seize Him. But He escaped their grasp.

Over and over the people react to Jesus and every time they react with kill Him, it's blasphemy and blasphemy is claiming to be

God. But there are other situations too. Luke 19:38-39 Palm Sunday as Jesus rides into Jerusalem the people cry out, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest". What was the reaction of the Pharisees to this? Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher rebuke your disciples". Why rebuke them? Because they're claiming he's the Messiah.

Matthew 26:63-66 and you can also find this in Luke and in Mark Jesus, before the high priest. The high priest said to Him, "I charge you under oath by the living God tell us if you are the Christ the Son of God". "Yes, it is as you say", Jesus replied, "But I say to all of you in the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One coming on the clouds of heaven". It sounds pretty clear but lets look at the reaction and we'll really get it clear. The high priest tore His clothes and said, "You have spoken blasphemy why do we need anymore witnesses. Now you have heard the blasphemy what do you think? He's worthy of death". Before Pilate the Jews insisted, "We have a law and according to law He must die because he claimed to be the Son of God".

When Jesus is on the cross Luke 23:35 the people stood watching and the rulers even sneered at Him they said, "he saved others let Him save Himself if he is the Christ of God the chosen one." If you really want to get down to it, ultimate enemies speaking about Jesus, Luke 4:34 Jesus is in the synagogue on the Sabbath. There is a man possessed by demons, here is what the demon says, "Ha, what do you want with us Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are the Holy one of God". Or again Luke 4:41, "Moreover demons came out of many people shouting you are the Son of God but he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak because they knew He was the Christ".

You want to know what the really crazy thing is? It's found in John 11:45-48, Jesus has just raised Lazarus from the dead and here is what happens. "Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what Jesus did put their faith in Him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. The chief priests and Pharisees called a meeting. What are we accomplishing they asked? Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. If we let Him go on like this everyone will believe in Him and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation". Did you here that? They know what Jesus has been saying

about Himself and they know He has been “performing many miraculous signs”. He claims to be the Messiah He’s doing what only the Messiah can do and yet they don’t want to believe. They knew what was happening but they were too proud they didn’t want to change because their life was good they were in power and they liked it the way it was.

I guess the question for us and for everyone is what about you? Do you see that He is the Son of God? Do you acknowledge it? Do you live it? Life might be good but with Jesus it will only get better.

In His name, Amen.