

Presented by Dr. Jimmy Hilton

**SOUTH POINT
BAPTIST CHURCH**
Finding God's Direction for Life



EXPERIENCING THE ABUNDANT LIFE: JOHN 2
“ARE YOU A TRUE OR A TEMPORARY BELIEVER?”
JOHN 2: 23-25

JOHN TELLS US ABOUT SOMETHING WHICH HAPPENED DURING JESUS' VISIT TO JERUSALEM. THE JEWISH LEADERS STILL DO NOT UNDERSTAND JESUS NOR ANY OF HIS SIGNS. BUT IN THIS PASSAGE WE ARE DEALING WITH PEOPLE WHO, WHEN THEY SAW THE MIRACLES OR SIGNS, BELIEVED IN HIS NAME. NOW THEY WANT TO FOLLOW HIM. EVEN THOUGH THE PEOPLE BELIEVED IN HIM, THE SCRIPTURE SAYS THAT JESUS DID NOT COMMIT HIMSELF TO THEM. IN OTHER WORDS, HE DIDN'T TRUST THEM. WHY? BECAUSE THESE PEOPLE ARE PERFECT ILLUSTRATIONS TO US OF THOSE WHO DO NOT TRULY BELIEVE. THEY THINK THEY DO, BUT THEY DO NOT. THEY BELIEVE IN HIS NAME BUT THEY HAVE NEVER BELIEVED ON HIM.

THEY GLORIED IN HIS SIGNS AND MIRACLES MORE THAN IN HIM. THEY MAY HAVE BEEN INTERESTED IN HIS PERSON AND/OR WITH HIS WORD OF AUTHORITY, BUT THEY DIDN'T TRULY BELIEVE. IT WASN'T A REAL, TRUE BELIEF. IT WAS SOMETHING TEMPORARY AND PARTIAL.

A TEMPORARY BELIEVER'S RESPONSE TO CHRIST IS INCOMPLETE

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY PEOPLE, WHO THROUGHOUT ALL OF HISTORY, HAVE TAKEN AN INTEREST IN JESUS AND HIS TEACHINGS, AND MOST OF THEM WOULD EVEN GO SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT THEY BELIEVE. BUT THEIR BELIEF IS DUE MORE TO AN INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY THAN TO A GENUINE CONVERSION OF THE ENTIRE PERSON. SO WHAT IS THEIR REAL TROUBLE? IT IS THAT THEIR POSITION IS NOT BASED ON THE WORD OF GOD. IT IS NOT BASED ON BIBLICAL TEACHING. THAT BEING TRUE, IT IS THEREFORE SUPERFICIAL. THEIR BELIEF IS PARTIAL, SO THEIR COMMITMENT TO CHRIST IS INCOMPLETE.

A TRUE BELIEVER SEES HIMSELF AS A HELPLESS SINNER WHOSE ONLY HOPE IS THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND TOTALLY COMMITS HIMSELF TO HIM

IN THE CASE OF SOME OF THE TEMPORARY BELIEVERS, THEIR HEADS ARE TOUCHED. IN THE CASE OF OTHERS, THEIR HEARTS ONLY ARE TOUCHED. IN THE CASE OF EVEN OTHERS, THEIR WILLS ARE TOUCHED. BUT IN ALL CASES, IT IS ONLY PARTIAL. A TRUE BELIEVER, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS TOUCHED IN EVERY PART OF HIS PERSON. TRUE BELIEF MEANS A COMPLETE AND TOTAL TRUST IN CHRIST. IF SOMEONE IS TRULY A CHRISTIAN, THEN THEIR WHOLE PERSON SHOULD CHANGE. CHRIST SHOULD AFFECT EVERY AREA OF A PERSON'S LIFE.

ONE MAJOR PROBLEM WITH A TEMPORARY BELIEVER IS THAT HE HAS NEVER BEEN HUMBLED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD. THEY ARE STILL IN CHARGE OF THEMSELVES. TRUE BELIEVERS ARE THE ONES WHO ARE WILLING TO BE “CROSS-BEARERS.” THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE, THEN AND NOW, WHO ARE NOT WILLING TO DO THAT. THEY WANT THE BLESSINGS, BUT THEY DON'T WANT ANY OF THE TROUBLE, OR THE PAIN, OF BEING A TRUE FOLLOWER OF CHRIST.

JESUS HIMSELF SUMMED THEM UP LIKE THIS: “THIS PEOPLE HONORETH ME WITH THEIR LIPS; BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR FROM ME”(MATT. 15:8)

Verse for the week: “In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me”(Ps. 120: 1)

Thought for the week: “Your life is a sermon, so be careful how you preach it.”