

## Judged By the Word of Christ

There is not much more important in our development as human beings than our ability to make decisions. There are many important decisions that we make in life, but the most important one is given to us in the last seven verses of John 12:

### John 12:44-50

44 And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. 45 And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. 46 I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. 47 If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. 48 The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. 49 For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. 50 And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.

Decisions are weighty when there is urgency, the subject of the decision is significant, and the consequences are momentous. Such is the case for the decision which Jesus bids us make, namely, to believe in Him. Notice that at the end of His public ministry, displayed in chapters 1-12, He presses upon the house of Israel the importance of recognizing and submitting to their Messiah.

#### I. **The timeliness of this decision is momentous (v. 44)**

Notice that the text says “Jesus cried out.” This verb is also used in chapter 11, verse 43, when Jesus calls Lazarus from the tomb. It is a cry of urgency.

#### II. **The subject of the decision is great (vv. 44-45)**

The subject of this great decision is to believe in Jesus Christ who is one with the Father. Jesus makes stupendous claims, but He also displays many miraculous evidences—consider the seven signs in John 2-11. Furthermore, there are thousands of witnesses to these miraculous signs, just as there will be 500 witnesses who saw Jesus in His resurrected body. Jesus here teaches us that the largest decision in life is to choose Him as Lord and Savior. It is all about Jesus.

#### III. **The consequences of this decision are enormous (vv. 46-50)**

There are both immediate and eternal consequences to this great decision.

##### a. The immediate consequence is to come out of darkness (v. 46)

Notice that Jesus says that if we reject Him we “remain in darkness.” He teaches us thereby that by nature we are in the throes of ignorance and rebellion. Only Jesus Christ can deliver us from this darkness into His marvelous light and the light that He provides is personal knowledge of God. As Jesus prays in John 17:3, “and this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” This is what life is all about. As A.W. Tozer once said, “We can never trust him too much, follow him too closely, or commune with him too unreservedly.”

##### b. The eternal consequence is deliverance from judgment (vv. 47-50)

Jesus teaches us that judgment is surely coming and that the only way for us to avoid the judgment of God against us as sinners is to put our faith solely in Jesus Christ. Note that Jesus teaches us the standard for this judgment: it is hearing and *keeping* the word that He has spoken. Jesus taught this same principle in Matthew 13 regarding the four soils. It is only the fourth soil that bears fruit, which is representative of saving faith. It is not simply a matter of hearing the Gospel but of putting the teachings of Jesus into practice. Notice also the time of this judgment. In verse 48: the “last day.” Jesus explains that in His first coming He came to

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save, but upon His second advent, His words will judge those who have heard and rejected His message. Jesus explains to us in verses 49-50 that He has spoken under the sole authority of His Father and that the commandment His Father has given Him brings us eternal life. What a gift!

### Discussion Questions

1. Why is Jesus so urgent in this speech to the Jews?
2. What is the essence of the decision He calls upon them to make?
3. What does He mean by calling Himself “the light”? Why do we need this light?
4. From this text, what do we learn about the consequences of rejecting Jesus and His teachings?
5. From this text what do we learn about the benefits that we enjoy by trusting in Him?

### Going Deeper

1. How can you better “keep” the words of Jesus in your personal life?
2. What implications does the coming judgment have in your personal life in the days ahead?