

Application Guide: “Two Responses to Jesus” (Mt. 7:28-9:13)

Feb. 20th, 2005: As an overview of Joe Bartemus’ previous two sermons, Kimber Kauffman preached a sermon dealing with two types of responses we might have to the teachings of Jesus. We can choose to be amazed at him and follow him (Mt. 7:29), or we can beg him to leave our presence (8:34). He then pointed us to the two types of wisdom described in James 3:13-18. Essentially, Kimber was asking the question, “You may know all the theology in your head and can get the right answers on a test, but what difference is it making in your everyday life? We must watch our “life and doctrine closely” (1 Tim. 4:16).

1. What is your relationship with God like?
 - a. Is he a coin-slot machine where you try to perform the right deed in order to win blessings?
 - b. Is he like Santa Claus where you expect him to give you everything you ask for if you’re good?
 - c. Is he a person whom you walk with daily and know on an intimate level?
2. Kimber quoted from N.T. Wright’s commentary on Mt. 8-9: “[Jesus] isn’t just somebody with good ideas...He has authority over everything.”
 - a. How do you make God a part of your everyday life? Do you look to God amidst stress at work, traffic jams, arguments with your spouse, pay raises (or layoffs), and when your children get in trouble at school?
 - b. Does God have authority over every aspect of your life – the way you spend your time, money, abilities, relationships, etc? How do you know?
3. James 3:13-18 describes two types of wisdom: wisdom from God and earthly “wisdom.” Kimber emphasized that true wisdom, a true understanding of theology, will play out in your life and deeds.
 - a. What difference is there between a professing Christian and a disciple of Jesus? To you, is Christianity just a tradition you’re a part of on Sunday morning, or is it a way of life?
 - b. How can we become people who exude the attributes of wisdom from above – humility, purity, peacefulness, sincerity, mercy, submission, impartiality, being considerate, and full of good fruits?
4. Throughout Paul’s letters, he is constantly commanding the recipients to take the doctrine they learn and apply it to the daily aspects of their lives (e.g. Rom. 12:1ff; Eph 4:1ff; 1 Tim. 4:10). As Kimber noted, watching your doctrine is the easy part; watching your life is where it gets difficult!
 - a. Think about all the “Christian” knowledge you obtain on a regular basis – what use are all the sermons and lessons you hear, Bible studies you go to, book you read, personal devotions you have, songs you listen to, classes you take, and fellowship you have with other believers?
 - b. Are you just puffing yourself up with knowledge, or are you putting these things into action to love others, help the poor, uphold justice, and proclaim the name of Christ?
5. What is one thing you need to take away from this sermon (and discussion) and implement into your own life?