

Receiving the Word of Christ
(John 12:47-50)

Introduction:

1. For several weeks we have been studying some important events that involve Christ.
 - a. We pointed out from 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 how Christ "*died for our sins,*" He "*was buried,*" and He "*rose again the third day.*"
 - b. According to Acts 1:3, Jesus was with His followers 40 days after He was raised.
 - c. We learn from Acts 1:9 that Jesus then ascended to heaven.
 - d. Two angels stated in Acts 1:10-11 that Jesus will return the same way that He left.
 - e. When Jesus returns, the resurrection and the judgment will take place.
2. In our study of the judgment we showed from 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 that each person will be judged on the basis of whether he knows God and has obeyed the Gospel.
 - a. To know God we must first believe that He exists (Hebrews 11:6).
 - b. Last Sunday we showed from Psalm 19 how we can know He exists.
3. Today we are basing our lesson on the Lord's teaching in John 12:47-50.
4. Jesus said we will be judged by the way we receive His Word.

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST IDENTIFY THE LORD'S WORD
 - A. According to John 12:49-50, Jesus delivered the message that the Father gave to Him.
 1. The Lord's teaching is the Word of God.
 2. We would expect this because Jesus is God's spokesman (Hebrews 1:1-2).
 - B. To be more specific, the Lord's Word is the New Testament (Hebrews 9:15).
 - C. We learn from Hebrews 9:16-17 that Jesus paid a high price for His New Testament to become effective.
 - D. Question: How much of the New Testament is the Lord's Word?
 1. We are fortunate to have many of the Lord's teachings in the Gospels.
 2. However, the Lord's Word is not limited to the Gospels.
 - a. (John 15:15b) Jesus revealed to the apostles everything He had heard from the Father.
 - b. (John 14:26) Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would help the apostles to remember the things He had taught them.
 - c. Paul showed in Ephesians 3:3-5 that the Spirit guided the apostles and prophets as they wrote the Lord's Word.
 - d. A helpful summary statement is found in 1 Corinthians 14:37.
 3. The entire New Testament is the Lord's Word.
- II. LET US CONSIDER POSSIBLE REACTIONS TO THE LORD'S WORD
 - A. Reactions to avoid:
 1. "refusing to receive the Lord's words" (John 12:48)
 - a. Jesus connected this reaction with rejecting Him.
 - b. Jesus said that His Word will be the standard of judgment at the last day.
 2. "changing [altering] the Lord's Word" (Galatians 1:6-9; Revelation 22:18-19)
 - B. Positive reactions:
 1. "continuing in His Word" (John 8:31-32)
 2. "letting His Word dwell in us richly in all wisdom" (Colossians 3:16)
 3. "rightly dividing His Word" (2 Timothy 2:15)
 4. "looking into His Word and doing what it says" (James 1:25)
- III. REACTING PROPERLY TO THE LORD'S WORD RESULTS IN SPECIAL BLESSINGS
 - A. "increasing your knowledge of Christ" (John 5:39; 2 Peter 3:18)
 - B. "knowing the truth that will make you free" (John 8:31-32)
 - C. "having Christ and the Father abide with you" (John 14:23)
 - D. "having your prayers answered" (John 15:7)
 - E. "building you up" (Acts 20:32)
 - F. "increasing your faith" (Romans 10:17)

G. "equipping you completely to do God's will" (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

H. "saving your soul" (James 1:21)

I. "spiritual growth" (1 Peter 2:2)

Conclusion:

1. In closing, let us mention 2 characteristics of the Lord's Word.
 - a. (John 6:63) Jesus said that His words *"are spirit, and they are life."*
 - b. He also said that His words are everlasting (Matthew 24:35 -- *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"*).
2. The time to receive the Lord's Word is now.
3. By receiving the Lord's Word now and continuing in it, we will not have to worry about being judged by it when He returns.