**Have You Heard The Word?**

Jesus makes an interesting statement to His disciples in John 15:3, *“You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.”* Now, without really digging into the context of this statement, just think about it with me for a moment or three…

He says *“the word”* (singular, as a *collective noun* encompassing everything He has *spoken* to them instead of several *individual statements*) had made them *“clean.”* This *cleansing* power of *the word* is obviously in reference to the *uncleanliness* (or *staining effect*) of sin on the soul. But think further about the implications of this statement…

It is *“the words”* of Jesus that *clean,* not the *miracles.* The *miracles* of Jesus generally did not *clean* those who saw them unless they, because of the miracles, *listened to* and *obeyed* what Jesus said. Note John 6:5-13 where Jesus fed roughly 5,000 people with *five barley loaves* and *two fish.* V.14 affirms that *“the people saw the sign which He had performed”* and said, *“This is of a truth the Prophet who is come into the world.”* Did witnessing and even benefitting from the miracle *“clean”* them from sin? They even believed and declared that He was *“the Prophet,”* and thus *believed* and *confessed* a measure of faith in Him. But again, did such *“clean”* them from sin? Let’s continue with the story…

The next day, *“the multitude… found Him on the other side of the sea,”* John 6:26. But He said to them, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because of you ate of the loaves, and were filled,”* vv.25-26. Jesus assesses and affirms their *carnality-* that didn’t really want *spiritual cleansing* from Him, just more food. He further instructs them (with *words!*), *“Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you,”* v.27. This *“food which endures to eternal life”* surely does not consist of grain and poultry, but *“the word”* that *cleanses* the soul and *prepares* it for heaven! In v.35 He brings it all home to and for them, *“I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”* But here’s the kicker…

Despite them having *believed* and *confessed* Him as *“the Prophet who is come into the world”* after witnessing the *sign* of the *loaves* and *fish* (cf. v.14), in v.36 Jesus states the truth plainly, *“But I say to you, that you have seen Me, and yet did not believe.”* Get that: they *saw,* and even *confessed,* but did not really *believe.* Why not? They did not **listen** to *the word* He spoke which would have *cleansed* them just like it did His disciples in John 15:3! How do we know this? Keep reading…

When this *multitude “grumbled”* at the words of Jesus in v.41, Jesus further explained what was happening, *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him,”* v.44. The logical question that follows is, “How does the Father *‘draw’* one to Jesus? Note carefully v.45, *“And they shall be* ***taught*** *of God. Every one who has* ***heard*** *and* ***learned*** *from the Father, comes to Me.”* One *hears* and *learns* saving ***words,*** and *“comes”* to Jesus for salvation by ***obeying*** them! It’s not enough to just *see* or even *experience* Jesus, one must *hear* and *obey* His *words* to be saved. How do we know this? Again, keep reading…

Jesus continued *speaking* and *explaining* the truth of the gospel (in *words*) to this multitude in vv.46-59. However, note that this *multitude,* and even some of Jesus’ *disciples* (not *twelve,* cf. vv.67ff) *“withdrew, and were not walking with Him any more,”* v.66. It was not the *miracle* Jesus performed to which they objected (or its *physical* benefits!), nor was it the *experience* of *seeing* Him in person that caused them to turn away, but it was, instead, His *word* that they to rejected…the same *word* that *cleansed* His disciples that *heard, learned,* and *obeyed* it in John 15:3!

What about you? Is your “belief” in Jesus based upon His *miracles* and your “personal experience(s)” with Him, or *the word* of His gospel message and your *obedience* to it? Unless you *hear, learn,* and *come* to Him in obedience, you, like this multitude in John 6, are *rejecting* Him…and are thus NOT *“clean because of the word”!* Think about it, won’t you? Eternity hangs in the balance.