

They will “*Slander*” you!

October 12, 2020

JOHN 10:19-20 NIV - (19) The Jews who heard these words were again divided. **(20)** Many of them said, “He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?”

SLANDER: **(1)** The action or crime of making a false spoken statement damaging to a person's reputation. **(2)** Make false and damaging statements about (someone).

Did you catch that? They called Jesus crazy and tried to tune him out. Does this sound familiar? It should simultaneously break your heart and refresh your heart that Jesus Christ got this same reaction. It should break your heart because as you publicly portray Christ as crucified, died, buried, and risen you get the reaction like a telemarketer calling during the family dinner. Jesus is a rude interruption to the idolatrous feasts of this world. But does this not break your heart? He is not valued? He is seen as insane; and even worse, as a demon. This is truly disheartening.

However, at the same time it is encouraging. Yes because Jesus himself encountered the very same response. In fact, it is still Him that is getting this response today. We understand that when we proclaim Christ that he is actually there with us, in our midst (**Matthew 28.20**). Our faithful High Priest sympathizes and refreshes us with his own compassion by reminding us of his infinite value, beauty, and power to save sinners.

So find encouragement today in the ministry, message and person of Jesus. He was and is confronting and conquering rebellious hearts, all for the praise and glory of his name.

The Pharisees were bitter critics of Jesus Christ; they used their religion as a camouflage to express their jealousy and rage against him. The Pharisees were not hesitant to stalk Jesus all day long, and followed him on every turn to find an excuse to criticize and demean his ministry.

When Satan initiated fury in Pharisees to accuse Jesus of wrongdoing, Jesus would do the following.....

- Jesus ignored the Pharisees – Believers should largely ignore their critics.
- Jesus remained persistent in doing God's business – Believers should never stop doing God's will.
- Jesus always withdrew to a silent place to pray for strength's renewal after ministering – Believers must always refill and refresh their energy through prayers.
- Jesus changed locations to avoid enemies' distractions – Believers should diversify in ministry to outsmart their enemies.

Believers must not forget Satan's intention is not to discourage them from serving God only, but his main motive is to kill, to steal, and to destroy their salvation (**John 10:10**). Hence, while we (believers) remain prayerful and watchful, we can follow Jesus' examples and appropriately react in all situations.

SCRIPTURE READING: PROVERBS 10:18

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: Truth is generally the best vindication against slander.

"A JOURNEY OF THE HEART"