

## Sermon on Reminiscere 04.03.2007

Sermon text: John 8, 21-30  
„Who Jesus is and what his job is“

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I read out to you the Gospel of John chapter 8, verses 21-30.

This is the text for the sermon for this Sunday called „Reminiscere“ in Germany.

It refers to psalm 25,6:

*„Remember, O Jehovah, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindness; For they have been ever of old.“*

Bible text: John 8, 21-30

- Joh 8,21 He said therefore again unto them, I go away, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sin: whither I go, ye cannot come.
- Joh 8,22 The Jews therefore said, Will he kill himself, that he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come?
- Joh 8,23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.
- Joh 8,24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for except ye believe that I am [he], ye shall die in your sins.
- Joh 8,25 They said therefore unto him, Who art thou? Jesus said unto them, Even that which I have also spoken unto you from the beginning.
- Joh 8,26 I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you: howbeit he that sent me is true; and the things which I heard from him, these speak I unto the world.
- Joh 8,27 They perceived not that he spake to them of the Father.
- Joh 8,28 Jesus therefore said, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am [he], and [that] I do nothing of myself, but as the Father taught me, I speak these things.
- Joh 8,29 And he that sent me is with me; he hath not left me alone; for I do always the things that are pleasing to him.
- Joh 8,30 As he spake these things, many believed on him.

This passage isn't easy to understand.

Many questions raise:

- what means: „where I go, you can not come?“
- what means: „ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sin?“
- what means: „Ye are from beneath; I am from above?“
- what means: „When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am [he], and [that] I do nothing of myself, but as the Father taught me?“

I think there are some more fundamental questions to ask.

Questions the Jews had at that time and still are asked today.

The basic question is:

Who is Jesus?

Is he only a man, the son of Joseph the carpenter or is there more about him?

The next question are:

What's Jesus job?

What's his intention?

What is his purpose?

And finally:

Who is Jesus talking about when he speaks of his father?

Is he referring to Joseph the carpenter?

But why does he speak of him in such a strange way?

I believe, as long as we do not have the answers to these basic questions, we can't understand what Jesus is talking about in this text.

To the first question: Who is Jesus?

The Jews believe Jesus is an ordinary man like everybody else. He was born in Bethlehem and raised in Nazareth. He was the son of Mary and Joseph. He learnt the trade of a carpenter.

The only unusual thing about him was, he was talking about God in a strange way and people believed he could work miracles.

Both offended the pharisees.

No doubt he was a good and peaceful man, but he can't talk about God in such a way and stay with tollkeepers and whores. That's bad company.

John the baptist once sent his disciples to Jesus and they asked:

„Are you the one who shall come or shall we wait for some one else?“ (Mt 11,3)

Jesus answered:

„Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up and the poor have good tidings preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me.“

Jesus gives here an answer, we do not expect. We would expect an answer that starts with:

„I am...“

But in his answer he says, have a close look what I do and then make up your own mind about who I am.

When we look at what Jesus does, we have to admit, he is by far more than an ordinary man and he is more than a prophet, even though the prophet Elia could work miracles too.

Which prophet could forgive sins?

To which prophet has God ever said:

„This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear you him.“ (Mt 6,17)

And which prophet has so far risen from death?

So as the Jews at their time had to make up their minds about the question who Jesus is, regarding what he said and did, so has anybody today.

In our Bible text of today, Jesus said:

„When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you shall know that I am he.“

This refers to Matthew 27, 54, the crucifixion of Christ:

„Now the centurion and they that were with him watching Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were done, feared exceedingly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.“

And what says the disciple Thomas when he sees and feels the cicatrices of the risen Christ:

„My Lord and my God.“ (John 20,28)

- pause -

Now since the first question has been answered, who Jesus is, we come to the second question:

What's Jesus job? What's his intention? What's his purpose?

What does the Bible tell us?

Gal 4,4+5

„But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law that we might receive the adaption of sons.“

Jesaja 53,5-6

„But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed.“

„All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way and Jehova hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.“

2.Kor. 5,21:

„Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in him.“

1.im 2,5-6

For there is one God, one mediator also between God and man, himself man, Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony to be borne in its own times.“

To sum it up:

Jesus job is to talk about God.

His intention is to reestablish the relation between man and God.

Sin doesn't mean anything else than the separation of God.

To reestablish the relation Jesus has to put the sin out of the world.

Romans 5,18:

„So then as through one trespass the judgement came unto all men to condemnation, even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life.“

The third basic question was:

Who is Jesus talking about, when he speaks of his father?

Jesus does not speak of Joseph.

Jesus speaks of God.

The Jews didn't understand that or at least they didn't want to understand it.

They believe in one God alone. For them it can't be possible that God has a son. It can't be possible that a son of God doesn't come in glory but as a small child in a cow house. It can't be possible that a son of God has company with tollkeepers and whores.

These answers lead us now to the answers of the last remaining question:

- what does it mean: „You are from beneath, I'm from above“.

The Jews are from this world, Jesus comes from heaven.

„You will seek me and die in your sin.“

The Jews know the Bible. In the Bible they search for the Messiah, but they don't recognize the Messiah and therefor they rest in their sins.

Apg 10,43:

„To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.“

As long as we stay in our sins, we can not have a relation with God.

This answers the last question:

- what means: where I go, you can't come“?

Jesus goes home to his father, to God into heaven again. As long as the Jews do not believe in Jesus, they will rest in their sins and aren't able to get into heaven.

My wish is that we don't misunderstand this text and think:

„That only happend to the Jews. We are Christians, our sins are forgiven and therefor we needn't worry about our future.“

In Matthew 7,21 Jesus says:

„Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.“

My wish is that the Holy Spirit may enlighten us that we learn to distinguish what the will of God is and what is not.

May the Holy Spirit be the lamp unto our feet and light unto our path (Ps 119,105)  
Amen.

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