

I Am: Part 9

Yahweh Tsidkenu - The LORD our Righteousness

Pastor James Bell

John 8:58 NLT

58 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I AM!"

When we think about Abraham we identify him with a time period but I Am must be identified as He always has been, He still is, and will be forever more. This was so hard for the people to understand because their thinking was shallow. Can we take a few minutes to move beyond the normalcy of how we perceive Him. Can we take a moment to move from where we are and bring our hearts to His throne room. The very place that we will receive judgement.

1 Peter 2:9 NLT

9...you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

This declaration is for those that have made Jesus their LORD and live a life of repentance. You are now walking in the role of a priest. And we know that Priest are individuals that are looked up to as leadership. So with that being said, we need to understand that God has placed each of us in the position of leading. God will and has assigned people for you to minister to. The question you must now ask yourself is "Am I leading by the example of Jesus or am I leading contrary to His word?"

This is purposed to speak to your heart in two references.

1. To set the tone for today's message
2. To allow the Holy Spirit and the word of God to evaluate you.

David prayed a prayer we all need to be sincere about.

Psalm 139:23-24 NLT

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. 24 Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

Jeremiah 23:1–8 NLT

1 “What sorrow awaits the leaders of my people—the shepherds of my sheep—for they have destroyed and scattered the very ones they were expected to care for,” says the LORD. 2 Therefore, this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to these shepherds: “Instead of caring for my flock and leading them to safety, you have deserted them and driven them to destruction. Now I will pour out judgment on you for the evil you have done to them. 3 But I will gather together the remnant of my flock from the countries where I have driven them. I will bring them back to their own sheepfold, and they will be fruitful and increase in number. 4 Then I will appoint responsible shepherds who will care for them, and they will never be afraid again. Not a single one will be lost or missing. I, the LORD have spoken! 5 “For the time is coming,” says the LORD, “when I will raise up a righteous descendant from King David’s line. He will be a King who rules with wisdom. He will do what is just and right throughout the land. 6 And this will be his name: ‘The LORD Is Our Righteousness.’ In that day Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety. 7 “In that day,” says the LORD, “when people are taking an oath, they will no longer say, ‘As surely as the LORD lives, who rescued the people of Israel from the land of Egypt.’ 8 Instead, they will say, ‘As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the people of Israel back to their own land from the land of the north and from all the countries to which he had exiled them.’ Then they will live in their own land.”

Just so that we know that this very word is a prophetic word spoken to Israel about the coming judgement and restoration that would be fulfilled through Jesus. And if we look at this from an overall picture then it is still God’s word to us today. This prophetic word highlights the Lord our Righteousness - Yahweh Tsidkenu. And the very first thing we see is a word of warning of judgement.

What sorrow awaits or what judgement awaits who? The ones leading, the shepherds, the kings, the prophets. Although this may be viewed as civil leaders we must understand that we are the ones leading by example, whether good or bad.

The bad that God focuses on is the misleading that caused His sheep to be scattered. Scattered to other nations. God’s judgement does not come from an all of a sudden act of disobedience. God warns and warns us of His wrath all through scripture but many have continued to neglect the warnings because they are empty. And this is the same thing that happened to Judah. And they were about to find out the judgement delayed is not judgement denied. These warnings can be found in Leviticus 26, Isaiah 39, and with Jeremiah. From Leviticus all the way to Jeremiah was a span around 800 years. Warning after warning but yet they chose to continue to ignore. Their persistent disobedience, idol worship, and failure to observe the Sabbath rest of the land.

As we allow the Holy Spirit and God's word to evaluate us today, what areas of our life have we continued to ignore the warnings. Yahweh Tsidkenu is our Righteousness which means He will start by bringing judgement. For 800 years they had forgot the out stretched hand of God that was displayed upon Egypt. Just as we spoke last week that Yahweh Rapha wanted to be their healer by turning Israels heart back to Him. To allow corrective judgement and not destructive judgement that Egypt would experience. And now Israel has shunned the covenant of God to be their healer and now welcoming the Righteousness of God. The LORD our Righteousness first deals with persistent disobedience. Peter states in 1 Peter 4 that judgement must begin in the House of God. Continuous sin will be met with Righteousness! Our continuous sin is described as evil in the sight of God.

So the question is posed here today, what acts of disobedience are we displaying for others to see. We have been purposed to lead others to the heart of God but are we positioned to fulfill this or cause them to go astray. You ever heard the statement, "I thought they were a Christian". Why is this statement usually made? Let's find out in scripture:

James 2:14–24 NLT

14 What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? 15 Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, 16 and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? 17 So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. 18 Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." But I say, "How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds." 19 You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror. 20 How foolish! Can't you see that faith without good deeds is useless? 21 Don't you remember that our ancestor Abraham was shown to be right with God by his actions when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see, his faith and his actions worked together. His actions made his faith complete. 23 And so it happened just as the Scriptures say: "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." He was even called the friend of God. 24 So you see, we are shown to be right with God by what we do, not by faith alone.

Our works is the proof of our faith. It's not the works that saved us but it's the fruit that proves our salvation. Just like it proves our salvation is disproves our salvation. If we are saying one thing then doing another this is what Jesus called hypocrisy. The greek word for hypocrite means one who is an actor in a play. That person portrays a character that they are not.

The magnitude of the leader is not just the “Christian” per say but those that teach false doctrine that cause people to be scattered. As leaders and priest we are to live and preach the full counsel of God’s word. When we fail to teach others by our actions then we are causing people to one day become scattered. How are your works affecting people that God has entrusted you set an example for?

The LORD our Righteousness operates on two fronts to produce the character of God. Or as we talked about in Part 1, the Holiness of God.

1. It brings judgement to hardened hearts
2. It restores what has been scattered

As we have already spoken about the judgement of the hardened heart let’s move into the restoration of the scattered.

Jeremiah 23:3–4 NLT

3 But I will gather together the remnant of my flock from the countries where I have driven them. I will bring them back to their own sheepfold, and they will be fruitful and increase in number. 4 Then I will appoint responsible shepherds who will care for them, and they will never be afraid again. Not a single one will be lost or missing. I, the LORD have spoken!

This insight is spiritually sobering. The remnant is the leftovers of those that were scattered. This means that not everyone that was scattered will be gather back to Gods heart. Having this understanding magnifies the judgement of those that caused people to be scattered. Does this enlarged picture bring understanding and conviction to the importance of who God has entrusted you with. This shows that our works not only brings Righteousness over your life but also the lives of others. Not everyone that we cause to be scattered will be saved. This is why it is so vital to understand that our actions affect everyone that God has assigned to us.

But God’s mercy exceeds where we fail. It’s not that His mercy cannot gather people but that His mercy cannot gather what is dead. His compassion means that He is still calling and that He has purpose for those that have not been destroyed. If there is a forest fire, most of the trees are burned up but there are some that do survive. Those trees are the remnant. This is the opportunity for those that do remain to repopulate. God said that He would gather those that endured and cause them to be fruitful and increase in numbers. This is not the gather that new leaders will do but only by God’s sovereignty. This is the display of God’s Righteousness by being our Righteousness.

2 Corinthians 5:21 TPT

21 For God made the only one who did not know sin to become sin for us, so that we who did not know righteousness might become the righteousness of God through our union with him.

This righteousness is what qualifies the remnant for restoration. The scattered are gathered not because they deserve it, but because Christ's righteousness covers them.

In closing I want to circle back to a few keys things that will help guide us this week and moving forward.

- What part of this message did the Holy Spirit point out to you that your rebellious in?
- What are you going to do about it?

Let me pray with you!