

Outline of Fr. Patrick Winslow's Lecture on Lesson 11

I. (John 8:12-59) First Approach - Old Testament background.

- a. The Law of Moses requires two witnesses to verify testimony.
 - i. The Jews are accusing Him of defying the Law since He is bearing witness to Himself without the two necessary witnesses. (vv 17)
 - ii. According to Our Lord there are two witnesses: The Father and Jesus (vv 18)
- b. The theme of "Light" and "Water" was presented earlier as it related to the Feast of Tabernacles.
 - i. Our Lord is like the pillar of light that led the Israelites through the wilderness out of bondage and slavery. (Exodus 13:21-22)
 - ii. Our Lord is the living water, which gives eternal life - like the water that came from the stone struck by Moses - providing life-giving water in the desert.

II. (John 8:12-59) Second Approach - What is happening at the moment?

- a. Jesus speaks to a group of Jews, both Pharisees and His own disciples. (vv 13 refers to the Pharisees; vv 31 refers to "those who had believed in Him.")
- b. The Pharisees apply the Law of Moses requiring two witnesses to testify to the truth - concluding that Jesus is not speaking the truth.
 - i. The basic question of authority.
 - ii. The bottom line question to any religious matter.
 - "Upon whose authority is something claimed to be true?"
 - Christians believe that God is the authority - that God has revealed Himself from the beginning through salvation history (through the Jews), and finally in the person of Jesus the Christ - the full revelation of God.
 - The practical necessity of the Church. The teaching of the Church connects us today to the teaching of Christ. Without a ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC and APOSTOLIC Church we could never trust the teaching handed down to us in Jesus' name. There would be no guarantee that it hadn't been changed.
 - Note that New Testament Scripture is a product of the early Church, therefore it can't stand on its own authority, but rather rests upon the authority of the Church.
 - iii. Jesus responds that His testimony is true and in verse 18 provides the necessary witnesses to verify - "myself and the Father"
- c. Verse 31 Jesus addresses His own followers.
 - i. Vv. 34 "Truly, truly, I say to you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not continue in the house forever; the son continues forever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are descendants of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me, because my word finds no place in you. I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father."
 - Their response: "Abraham is our father."
 - Jesus says that their father is the devil, the father of lies, and that they are not of God.

- ii. Vv. 51 responding to their accusation that He is a Samaritan and has a demon, Jesus says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”
 - Jesus’ followers respond that Abraham died, the prophets died - who does He think He is?
 - Jesus retorts that He is glorified, not by Himself, but by His Father – the One they claim to be their God. He makes a comment about Abraham, “your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day; he saw it and was glad.”
 - They respond, how could Abraham have known you?
- iii. Vv. 58 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”
 - He effectively equivocated Himself with God.
 - They picked up stones ready to take Him out.

III. Third Approach - The pastoral points

- a. Vv. 12 “I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” → Jesus is the light that illumines our path, and shows us the way to the freedom of becoming children of God.
 - i. Two important presumptions are made.
 - First, we are in darkness - effectively made blind.
 - Second, we can come to see our own blindness → leads us to cooperate with the grace of God to accept the divine gift of Faith via baptism.
 1. We must make a “space” within us to receive the gift of faith (v. 37).
 2. Self-righteousness is the great obstacle. Humility is necessary.
 - ✧ St. Augustine when asked by a student what one needs to enter into eternal life responded, “you need three things: humility, humility and humility.”
 3. To recognize our own blindness is necessary to be open to receive the light sent by God.
- b. Vv. 44 “you are of your father the devil.” → The effects of sin are severe.
 - i. The fall of original sin has made us children of the devil. This is a grave consequence.
 - To be a child of the devil is to be a slave.
 - The life in a concentration camp during WWII. Hitler is to his guards as the devil is to one of his “children.” It is a family of fear, a hierarchy of slavery - all for the purpose of abusing. It is the exact opposite of a family.
 - We are in grave need of a savior.
 - ii. The effect of sin is so grave - it not only disfigures us and separates us from God, but it has set man on the course to kill Him.
- c. Vv. 44 (continued) “and your will is to do your father’s desire.”
 - i. We share our father’s desire.
 - To be of God is to share in His desire.
 - To be of the devil is to share in his desire.
 - ii. Humility is necessary for the divine gift of faith, and desire is the fuel propelling one to follow Christ.