



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

April 21, 2021

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 16

UCJCI 42nd SYNOD THEME 2021 – Rooted, Resilient: Responding in HOPE (Health, Opportunity, Peace, Evangelism)

Whose Voice Do I Listen To?

By Mr. Herman Wilson

Please read John 10: 11-18.

Christ Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, came into this world to inaugurate the kingdom of God and to populate it with those whom God will save, that is, those who will believe in His name. These are the ones that Christ Jesus classified as His sheep.

The Pharisees, to whom Jesus directed His message, were constantly questioning His identity. Despite Jesus' responses, they frequently heckled Him and chose not to understand the significance of what He was saying. By doing so, they were hardening their hearts to the revelation of divine truth. They were not seeking to fully understand what Moses had written. Earlier, as recorded in John 5: 39, 45-47, Christ Jesus had said to them:

39 You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, (John 5:39)

45 "But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. 46 If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. 47 But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?" (John 5:45-47)



At John 8:37-38, 44 Jesus further indicated to the Pharisees:

37 I know that you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are looking for a way to kill me because you have no room for my word. 38 I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you are doing what you have heard from your father."

44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Indications are that Jesus might have been alluding to the cryptic declaration of the Gospel wherein at Genesis 3:15 God said to the serpent (Satan):

*And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel."*

Many years after Jesus' crucifixion, the Apostle Paul commented on God's revealed wisdom in redeeming mankind. He wrote:

*8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 However, as it is written:
"What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human mind has conceived"—
the things God has prepared for those who love him—
10 these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. (1 Corinthians 2:8-10)*

Jesus characterized the Pharisees collectively as the 'hired hand'. They burdened the people with legalism, distorted the Mosaic Law, and made it difficult for the people to truly understand the Word of God.

By contrast, Jesus is the Good Shepherd. There is a bond between the sheep and the Shepherd. He is committed to bringing mankind back to God and enabled this by laying down His life as atonement for our sins. He indicated that He did not come to save the Jews only, but also the Gentiles. This is implied in John 10:16 where He said:

16 I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. This was later confirmed through the apostolic ministries.

This fact, for example, was related by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 3:6 where he said:

6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 3:6)

The sheep is therefore the Church, the Body of Christ, comprising Jews and Gentiles.

The Present Age

There is nothing new under the sun.

Similar to the past, there are in this current age, competing ideas and a multiplicity of religious views. Confusion, despondency, and apathy are prevailing issues. There are varying theories concerning human existence. The pressing question therefore is: **Whose voice do I listen to?**

Spiritual forces in the unseen realm are still active in influencing the human psyche. There is indeed a raging battle for minds. The battle for minds is becoming increasingly intense in this age of technological advances and information explosion. Truth is viewed as relative and moral absolutes are denied.

From the Christian perspective, the Scriptures, taken in context, are our absolute reference in countering these challenges. The apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 declared:

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

The Children of God, the sheep of Christ Jesus, are secured eternally and are not subject to condemnation. This is assured by Christ Jesus.

...4 having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. (Colossians 2:14-15)

But although believers, the new humanity, are not of this world, we are engaged in it. We are still faced with challenges arising from the usual unforeseen changes in circumstances of life. We are inevitably subjected to competing voices.

The social network has a significant impact on how we live. Many people are gullible, many have difficulties in separating facts from fiction, and many are engaged in conspiracy theories with confusing religious overtones.

For the believer in Christ Jesus, His voice stands supreme among the maze of competing voices, because the words He speaks are of the Spirit and they are life. (John 6:63) His words reflect truth, wisdom, justice, kindness, and righteousness. They promote well-being; focus on spiritual realities and eternal destiny. They inspire perseverance by faith. God the Father, Christ Jesus, the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and creation are our collective references for knowledge, inspiration, and guidance.

16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

When the Scripture speaks, it is God who speaks. In our decision-making, we attune to His voice through a combination of prayer and His spoken and written words – the Holy Scriptures.

The apostles were commissioned by Christ Jesus to convey His message, and they did so using words taught by the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul at 1 Corinthians 2:13 said -

This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.

Presently, students with a foundational knowledge of the Christian faith invariably face opposition to their beliefs while attending various universities. Some are able to persevere. Others either succumb to the pressure due to fear of academic failures or become unbelievers. They are potentially subjected to the voices of those who espouse anti-Christian beliefs, atheism, agnosticism, and various other viewpoints.

Deciphering the voice of truth from these conflicting voices can be extremely challenging for young believers. It is one of the main contemporary issues within our Church family. Parents, no doubt, are concerned about the changes in their children's worldviews. They hope that the foundational teachings still hold and that at some point in the future, the spark of the Christian fervor will be re-kindled. We exercise our faith through fervent prayers because all things are possible with God.

Assurances for the Coming Age

The believers (the sheep) hear the voice of God because He enables them. Christ Jesus said to a throng of followers:

44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day. (John 6:44)

65 He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them." (John 6:65)

God calls people to Himself through the declaration of the Gospel:

because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. (Romans 1:16)

Believers are enabled to counter the opposing viewpoints of the world because they are endowed with the ability to have the correct perspective concerning natural and supernatural realities.

Let us meditate diligently on these things as we await the Blessed Hope. Knowing the Shepherd's voice makes the difference between life and death.



Savannah UC Discipleship Group



On Saturday, April 10, 2021, the Youth Discipleship Group was engaged in a powerful motivational message by Ms. Yolanda Whittaker, Chairperson for the Cayman Church Sports Outreach Association. The discussion set the platform for the teens to give much consideration to their upcoming election of Executive Officers to lead the Youth Discipleship Group. The team left motivated and empowered to serve with a new zeal for Sports Evangelism.

Savannah UC Youth Group

On Friday April 9, 2021 a total of 58 children and teens gathered for an evening of fun with the Fun Truck. The Game truck provided a variety of exciting games that catered to 28 persons at a time. Families came out to enjoy the festivities which provided a wonderful opportunity to evangelize and promote the Church's Youth Ministry. From the event a mother and her son came to church the following Sunday and promised to return for future church activities.



WILL YOU STAND IN THE GAP

EZEKIEL 22:30
 "I LOOKED FOR SOMEONE AMONG THEM WHO WOULD BUILD UP THE WALL AND STAND BEFORE ME IN THE GAP ON BEHALF OF THE LAND SO I WOULD NOT HAVE TO DESTROY IT. BUT I FOUND NO ONE."

A call to Corporate Repentance

R Y/Savannah United Church

Youth Ministry

presents

Youth LINK-UP

Open Air Fellowship

On the Savannah United Church Grounds

April 30, 2021

Starting at 7:30pm-9:30pm

Guest Speaker: Pastor Cassius Feare

Special Guest Performer: MICHELLE T

UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 22. (Thursday) Earth Day**
- April 24. (Saturday)**
Lay Leaders Training Course – via Zoom
Women's Fellowship Tea Party (Webster Memorial UC) – 3:00pm-7:00pm
- April 25. (Sunday) 4th Sunday of Easter**
- April 30. (Friday)**
YLNE YOUTH LINK-UP OPEN AIR FELLOWSHIP – SAV UC 7:30pm-9:30pm

Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council
 Sundays at 7:45am on Radio Cayman

on Radio Cayman 89.9
 every Sunday at 7:45 am
April 25, 2021
Mr. Herman Wilson

Published by the Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands
 292 Prospect Point Road
 P.O. Box 1700 Grand Cayman KY1-1109 CAYMAN ISLANDS
 Tel: 1 345 947 1963 Email: rdgs@cicucjci.com or cirmcinfo@gmail.com
 Website: unitedchurch.org.ky