

INTRO Today we hear about POWER and AUTHORITY – esp applicable for NSJ

1<sup>st</sup> Reading NUM – God has Moses share some of his power with elders during EX (judges)

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading JAS – criticizes those with power who abuse it

Gospel – Apostles come to J - someone is using J's name to cast out demons, but not a follower JC.

POWER – AUTHORITY – where does it come from? How do we use it? Abuse it?

What are the implications for us?

LUP

NUM (also EX18) – During the Exodus the people complain often

No water – they get it No bread – they get it No meat – they get it

They come to Moses with disputes and Moses makes decisions – overwhelming for Him

God says 'set aside 70 elders and I'll take some of your spirit and give to them'

Then THIS happens - READ IT

- Power/Authority – THIS is the creation of Judges (for Israel, and us)
- These 70 judge disputes for the next 40 years in the desert (break for Moses)
- Gave Israel a new understanding of the law
- God's Covenant, 10 commandments, law of the land and these 70 made decisions based upon that law (1) for the good of the people (2) for the glory of God
  - Law – not an external law imposed upon them
  - Law – freely embraced as our own because the giver loves us, for our benefit

THUS – PS 19 READ IT “for the precepts of the Lord give joy to the heart”

Now this Psalm is in two parts – characteristics of the law AND plea for help to conform to it

1<sup>st</sup> 2 stanzas tell the characteristics of the law AND the fruit of those characteristics

Law of the Lord is perfect, trustworthy, pure and true – and it shares the fruit of each

2<sup>nd</sup> 2 stanzas are OUR plea to help - cleanse me from unknown faults

- from wanton sin restrain me - let not sin RULE (addictions) over me

JAS takes a different approach to power and authority – its a condemnation of their abuse

GOSPEL

READ IT

- Remember last week I said JC was getting serious, tougher and tougher, Here It Is
- Jesus is playing for Keeps
  - No holds barred – if something gets in the way – get rid of it!
  - Hand, Foot, Eye – *not suggesting we maim ourselves*
    - What you Do (Hand, Foot – go, Eye - see)
    - Where you Go **IF ITS LEADING YOU TO SIN**
    - What you see **GET RID OF IT**
  - OUR CONTROL – what do you DO in your life that leads to sin
    - Where do you go What do you see CUT IT OFF – GET RID OF IT

THERE WILL BE SURPRISES ON JUDGEMENT DAY – What do you think happens?

We tend to focus on the negative – sins, shortcomings, selfish acts

Jesus talks about the millstone for a reason – sin IS terrible (teach someone to sin worse)

- BUT in today's Gospel Jesus points out Judgment has another component
  - If someone gives a cup of water IN CHRIST'S NAME, he'll be rewarded
    - Think what that means every act of forgiveness every merciful act we do
    - Every penny given every piece of clothing every visit to the sick
    - Every kind letter every prayer for needy every word of comfort
    - Every single action we perform as Christians to love God and neighbor
    - Is noticed, remembered and is rewarded on Judgment Day
    - God's Mercy is part of Judgment Day too
- Jesus calls each of us – He's playing for keeps – and He wants to fill us with HS (Power)
- The Spirit moves where it wills (ask Eldad & Medad) – that Spirit can be released in US
- How we live – where we go, what we do are so important that

JESUS SAYS CUT IT OFF GET RID OF ALL THAT LEADS YOU TO SIN

- Sin is real - Evil is real

- Good is also real & Love of Jesus real – and its ours if we but accept it
- Nothing would please Jesus more