

Their own eyes

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[0:00] Judges 17, verse 6.

In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes. There's like verses through the Scriptures that tell us of this approach to choosing your own way, doing that which is right in your own eyes, living a life that is not accountable to anyone.

Lot did that in Genesis 13, verse 10, when Lot and Abraham were surveying the scene, and Lot lifted up his eyes and he saw the plain that was well watered.

He saw the plains towards Sodom and Gomorrah and he moved in that direction. Lot did that which was right in his own eyes. And people these days are like that.

[1:21] They're acting as if there is no king, as if there's no higher authority than themselves to which they are to be accountable to. And the Bible warns us against this.

In Isaiah 5, verse 21, for example, Isaiah 5, verse 21, it says, Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight.

Sedate to them to be wise in our own eyes, to be prudent in our own sight. And we've got to be watchful for this, all of us, every one of us, especially me.

We've got to be careful that we don't follow that which is in our own eyes, but to try to seek that which is God's will. And sometimes we can be pulled in all kinds of directions.

The crowd will try to pull us to follow that which is popular. There's a battle going on that many are unaware of. A battle going on.

[2:26] And it was challenging to sing that song just then, wasn't it? Onward Christian soldiers. Onward Christian soldiers. We need to think, it is a battle. I know, I was going to mention this in passing this morning's message, because we talked about being faint-hearted.

And just a bit of a funny story, really. I was at one of the community events lately, and they had some different stalls. And they did some checking for diabetes.

And I went to this stall, and I've got a pinprick in my finger to test the diabetes, and I got quite faint. I got quite faint. I was such a weakling. It was terrible. It was so pathetic, really.

But I got faint. I got faint just having my finger pricked with this test for diabetes. So I certainly don't want to get diabetes. I don't have to do that too often.

But then, after I finished at that stall, I went across to the army were there, with their tanks and all their artillery and all their machinery. And I was talking to one of the soldiers there, and I asked if he'd seen any action.

[3:32] And he said he'd been to Afghanistan. And you make this sort of put quite a contrast there for me. But I gave him faint, a little pinprick in my finger. And these men and women are serving this country, taking awesome risks in the battle that faces them.

But there's a battle going on for us, brothers and sisters, too. There's a battle going for us, and some are unaware of it. On the church scene, we're seeing there's a battle raging on the church scene.

And it's between two fathers, two fathers, the father of lights, and the father of lies. Two fathers that are spoken of in the Word of God. And now some of this might be a bit confronting for people here tonight, but I don't want to hold back.

I think it needs to be said, and I'm not making any apologies for it. In many churches today, there's rampant error.

Rampant error. Hysteria and hypnotism. You know, you see contrasts of what goes on in certain styles of meetings, and it's just the same as what the hypnotists do on the stage.

[4:46] And it's like a quote I heard of Paul Walsh's, no one wants to study doctrine anymore, they just want to listen to songs and read the back of Christian T-shirts.

That's so true, isn't it? They want to listen to songs and look at the back of Christian T-shirts, read the slogans. That's about the extent of the doctrine. As if blown by contrary winds.

That's what's going on in the church scene today. People are being swept along, swept along, blown by winds, as it were. Sometimes winds in all kinds of directions.

You know, I'm saddened to see it in the lives of some people who are very dear to me. Very dear to me. Winds of doctrine. On the one hand, you can see winds of liberalism, ecumenism, and then on the other hand, the winds of a sensual, carnal kind of Christianity.

Contrary winds. Brothers and sisters, I want to exhort you tonight to be watchful about these contrary winds. People are being swept along as they're chasing after celebrities, signs and wonders, so-called.

[5:58] But really deceptions. Deceptions, and I believe demonic deceptions. And there are churches in this neighbourhood, in this near neighbourhood.

Demonic deceptions are happening. And Christians are being swallowed up by such things. And there is need for warning. Warning. Warning. This is not popular.

But the Bible speaks to us of warning. For example, as Christ is spoken of in Colossians 1, Paul writes, of Christ in you, the hope of glory.

And he says, verse 28, whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man, in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

I want to issue a warning. To issue a warning, strong and clear. What you think is right can be wrong.

[7:01] What you think is right can be wrong. It was for me. I was in the Pentecostal movement for many years. I see it now as built on falsehood.

What you think is right can be wrong. Some seem to use the philosophy, how can it be wrong when it feels so right. Sounds like the modern love songs of today.

How can it be wrong when it feels so right. Especially when it's cloaked in religious language and talk of spiritual themes. When people talk of dreams and visions and manifestations.

Wins of doctrine. Wins of doctrine. False revivals. I believe from Azusa Street we've seen false revivals. Brothers and sisters, please, I urge you to question that which is going on.

Some will use the approach, what will attract people? That should be the mantra as to how we build a church. What will attract people? Rather than, what will glorify God?

[8:07] What will glorify God? Now, of course, these two statements are not essentially exclusive. We can seek to attract people in godly ways, through godly worship, through godly doctrine and teaching and truth and still glorify God.

But it must be that which glorifies God, which is the first call. Call. That is the first thing. Does it glorify God? But every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Every man did that which was right in his own eyes. If it gives you a buzz, if it makes you feel spiritual, if it draws a crowd, how can it be wrong if it feels so right?

What I'm talking about is some crazy things are going on. And these are commonplace. And there's folk who've been here of late who've gone chasing after such things.

I'm sad to have to say so. But things such as people experiencing glittering gold dust falling upon them. Oil appearing on people.

[9:16] So-called slaying in the spirit. Trances. Extra-biblical revelations. Suppose it encounters with angels. Visits to heaven. Now Paul visited heaven but he didn't brag about it.

He didn't make it a side show or some kind of spectacle showmanship. In some churches and you see and read of it on the internet, man are falling from heaven.

God's been there and done that. It's not for now. Gemstones, jewels and angel feathers appearing and falling on people. All these spectacles. It's all about the atmosphere.

About the spectacle. People flailing around on the ground. We see that in the Bible, yes. People flailing around on the ground. Brothers and sisters but it's not God doing it.

Repetitive music. Getting people worked up. All kinds of entertainment to draw a crowd. People shaken as if they're having a seizure. Is it God?

[10:19] Is it truly God? Friends, we've got to question that. Animal noises. Spiritual drunkenness. So-called. Altered states of consciousness. As I say, the hypnotists are very good at it too.

And it's a focus on an entertainment. A spectacle. A show. As if the church has got to put on a show that's better than the other churches shows. Or you've got to have some name in lights that's going to draw the people.

Some new anointing. Some new preacher. In the word, some cried out, Lord, Lord, have we done this? Haven't we done that? He says to them, I never knew you.

That's telling, isn't it? And friends, we need to be warned about such things. The church and Christians today have the crying need for discernment. And I just want to urge you, if it's extra-biblical, it must be regarded as in doubt.

It's not to say God can do signs and wonders and wonderful, miraculous things. He can. And He does. In answer to believing prayer of His people.

[11:31] It's when it becomes a spectacle and a showmanship and some kind of crowd-drawer. And when it's extra-biblical, when there's things that we don't see in the Scriptures, we have to question that.

Search the Scriptures, see if it is so. We must not follow the fads and trends at the expense of the truth. These are signs, lying signs and wonders.

Signs of the health of the church that Christians have to resort to such things. Signs of a sick church, of a corrupted church, counterfeit anointings and con men.

Con men. I've seen them. I've been there and seen what goes on. Supposed prophecies that do not come true. Dare I say, witchcraft. Churches departing from the faith.

But every man did that which was right in his own eyes. We need to be very careful, brothers and sisters, and I know I need to be careful about saying what I would consider not of God.

[12:34] But if it doesn't measure up, then this tells us so. I believe that the church has lost the beauty and become ugly in God's sight.

It says in Psalm 96, verse 9, I worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Fear before him all the earth. Worship him in the beauty of holiness.

Our worship should be a beautiful thing. It should be a holy thing that he is well pleased with. And the church is called in the Scriptures 1 Timothy 3.15, the pillar and ground of the truth.

There should be no question about that upon which we stand. It is the pillar and ground of the truth. There's nothing in doubt about it.

Yet discernment has gone out the window as every man has done that which was right in their own eyes. As someone puts it, people who love the truth will divide from people who love lies.

[13:39] We need the undiluted preaching of the word of God. An authoritative stand for the truth. And this is sadly in decline on many quarters. We need a renewed concern for doctrine, for sound doctrine, for the absolutes.

Unity in the faith is impossible without the doctrine of Christ. We read in Jeremiah 7.24, But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the councils and in the imagination of their evil heart and went backward and not forward.

People are going backward today. Churches are going backward, people are falling backward.

They are walking in the councils and in the imagination of their evil heart. Jeremiah 13.10, it says, This evil people which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart and walk after other gods to serve them and to worship them, shall be even as this girdle which is good for nothing.

Refusing to hear the word of God, walking in the imagination of their evil heart. We need to hear the word. The word must be that which we hear and heed.

to be alerted to the danger that is going on and it's danger from within, from professing Christians. We need to aim to please God, not man. Not a false gospel but the truth.

[15:04] Not a toleration of error but a standing firm. And error is being propagated today. A false gospel.

In Isaiah 30.10, the prophet heard the voice of the people and they said to him in Isaiah 30.10, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things. Prophecy deceits. The people said tell us something smooth. We want something sweet and warm and fuzzy and it's not going to be too tough or hard. Tell us some smooth stuff, preacher. Tell us some deceits. Jeremiah 6.14, one of the preachers there was one of the false prophets in Jeremiah 6.14 and he says, Peace, peace when there is no peace. Friends, it was falsehood. It was lies disguised as truth. And there's a subtle substitute in the church scene. And for many it appeals. It appeals. It sounds good.

[16:10] It carries the label Christian but it is not real. It's a poor substitute. It's like a preacher put it, If your religion hasn't changed you, you need to change your religion.

Sometimes we have many false professions. People saying they're a Christian but there's no conversion. If your religion hasn't changed you, you need to change your religion. So true, isn't it? It's sensual, experiential but there's no life there. Notice in Judges 17.6 it says, In those days there was no king in Israel but every man did that which was right in his own eyes. There was no king. That's where the problem stems. When we lose the authority of the king. We have to come under the authority of the king. In Ecclesiastes 8.4 it says, Where the word of a king is there is power. Where the word of a king is there is power.

[17:15] We've got the word of the king. The king of kings and the lord of lords. It's to his allegiance that we must follow. And the important message for today that which we need to hear, the message that we need to hear is not so much how to have happy families and how to have nice children.

It's not about finding health, wealth and prosperity but how to get right with God. That is the message. That is the message. I know I said it before at the old Sally Army church in Moonser. It had this slogan on the front of the church and it was an old slogan. The paint was just about peeling off. It says, Get right with God. That's a good slogan on the front of the church, isn't it? Amen? Get right with God. That's a good slogan. That's what we need to do. That's what people need to hear. That's what we need to preach. That's what we need to respond to. We've lost that in many quarters in the church, that true power.

[18:21] Why? Because we stray from the word of the king where no king is. Every man will do that which is right in his own eyes. And people will say, they'll question, they'll counter what I'm saying today, they'll argue as dear ones in my own acquaintance will try to do about man's opinions.

But really it comes down to that it really doesn't matter what you think. It does not matter what you think. It does not matter what I think. It matters what he says. That's what matters. The authority of the king. That's what matters. And in all this church talk today of being relevant, we've got to be scripturally relevant. We've got to be relevant to the scriptures, to what God says. Your opinion is irrelevant. Your feelings are irrelevant. It must be the word of the king that we must stand upon. A faithful Christian is one who takes God's side. When there's a controversy, take God's side, not the world's side. Really, there's no middle ground.

[19:39] We talked about those extremes in the happy clappy side of Christianity. But there's another side too.

There's the liberal church. There's the liberal ecumenical church. There's no middle ground. There is no middle ground.

Some will have all kinds of views and they'll voice them and some Christians will argue on subjects such as euthanasia, abortion, so-called gay marriage, psychology, all manner of subjects like environmentalism, and the emphasis will be on social action, on tolerance, on human rights, so-called, on being progressive, on being relevant or tolerant people. And some say human beings are basically good. It's all about self-esteem.

But it's a disregard for the Bible. There's a degree of self-esteem, I suppose, to a minor extent, but it's only, you're only truly yourself when you're in Christ, you're only truly the best person you can be when you're in Christ.

[21:11] And all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, so we can't lay any claim to it. It's not about self-esteem or human rights, because man is not basically good, he's basically bad.

It does not matter what men say, what the government says, or what is popular. No matter what you say or think, wrong is always wrong.

It doesn't matter what you feel about it, it doesn't matter what you think about it, we're not called to social justice, we're not called to creation care, we're not called to dialogue, but the preaching of the cross.

The preaching of the cross, that's what we call to be about. And I want to warn you against such things today, because it's important that we're alerted to what's going on, and it's common, it's almost mainstream, false teaching and liberal churches toning down biblical truth.

An old-time preacher put it like this, C.T. Studd, he said, are you living for the day, or are you living for life eternal? Are you going to care for the opinion of men here, or for the opinion of God?

[22:22] The opinion of men won't avail as much when we get before the judgment throne, but the opinion of God will have we not then better take his word and implicitly obey it.

Take the word and obey it. But every man did that which was right in his own eyes. We need to watch that, don't we? I need to watch that, we need to watch that. It's about accountability.

It's about accountability. In Romans 14, 12 it says, so then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. So, the problem is sin.

The problem is sin. It's not dysfunctional behaviour. It's not your drug habit. It's not your whatever it might be, lack of self esteem.

It's sin. A preacher said this, counselling is not to sit around two to three hours talking about somebody's mother.

[23:29] Counselling is to deal with the issue at hand. Sin. Man has only one problem and it is sin. I don't care whatever your problem is, it is a result of sin.

That's why it's so important to expose sin. People tell me judge not lest you be judged. I always tell them twist not scripture lest you be like Satan.

It's sin. And we need to judge ourselves, examine ourselves. In the word it says in Isaiah 5 verse 20, Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil that put darkness for light and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight. Friends, we need to be guarded, don't we? We can't trust our own eyes.

I know my eyesight's not what it used to be, but spiritually we're talking here, we need to watch what we watch and consider what do we see and do we see that which God wants us to see?

[24:41] Are our eyes of our understanding enlightened that we might see what God wants us to see? Again, another preacher, I'll quote him, the person who loves you most will tell you the most truth.

One of the greatest distinguishing marks of a false prophet is that he will always tell you what you want to hear. He will never rain on your parade. He will get you clapping. He will get you jumping. He will make you dizzy. He will keep you entertained. So entertained you are never addressed with the great issues such as these. Is God working in your life? Am I growing in holiness?

Have I truly been born again? End quote. So true, isn't it? These are questions we need to consider. The path seldom travelled is the one we must choose.

And we need to discern what is of God and what is not. To consider the real issues about the authority. Is it the authority of the king? Or is it just what's fleshly and popular at the time?

[25:42] Is it just the latest fad and gimmick and hoo-ha? Or is it God's authority that leads us? But every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

It's like Ravenhill said this, if Jesus had preached the way many preachers preach today, he wouldn't have ended up being crucified. You know, people don't like to hear this stuff.

The king sets out what is right and what is wrong. In Hebrews 4.13 all things are going to be opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to deal.

Hebrews 4.13 all things are going to be opened unto his eyes. You might be doing things right in your own eyes, but his eyes are seen too. And we're witnessing this dangerous resurgence of an interest in things spiritual.

It's sometimes a real smorgasbord, a real hodgepodge of what is going on. As long as it's spiritual, you can mix anything pretty much together these days.

[26:42] But men's philosophy can be dead wrong. And truth is that from which we must not be moved. To quote Spurgeon, it's never right to do a little wrong, to obtain the greatest possible good.

It's never right to do wrong. Your duty is to do the right. Consequences are with God. Vance Hampton, another preacher, said if we preach the whole counsel of God, we shall be accused of extremism, not only by the world, but also by a professing church that cannot endure sound doctrine.

You're going to be accused of extremism. This church will be accused of being extreme, preaching the whole counsel of God, because the professing church cannot endure sound doctrine.

We must die daily. The word says that we are to die to self, to sin, and to the world, not to compromise with the world, but to take up our cross, to deny ourselves, and to follow him.

Friends, I want to urge you to consider that which you're looking at. Is it right in your eyes, but not in his? We are accountable, everyone, every one of us, everyone is accountable and answerable to God.

[27:56] And people who love the truth will divide from people who love lies. God's says in Proverbs 3 verse 7, Be not wise in thine own eyes, fear the Lord, and depart from evil.

There's an answer to the question there, isn't there? Be not wise in your own eyes, fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It's about repentance. And we've talked today about that which people see is right in their own eyes.

Just to mention, another angle to look at this is to look at things through the eyes of God. If it were possible that we could put on the spectacles, as it were, the lens that God would look down on humanity.

It says in Psalm 33 verse 13, The Lord looketh from heaven. God's looking from heaven. He beholdeth all the sons of men from the place of his habitation.

He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. God is looking at you, and he's looking upon you right now. He's looking upon you every moment, every day.

[29:09] And verse 18 of Psalm 33 says, Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy, to deliver their soul from death and to keep them alive in famine.

That's good news, isn't it? He's looking at you, and he's looking at you with mercy. He's looking at you as he did. Look upon Noah. In Genesis 6 verse 8, But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Noah set the example as much as we know. Even Noah was not spotless in his profession. In 1 Kings 15 verse 5, we read that David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord.

The verse goes on to say except for what happened with Uriah. His son Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord. And then Jehoshaphat did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord. But he did something that he shouldn't have done. We all need to consider, are we doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord? Jeremiah 52, two specs of a man who did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord.

[30:18] In Psalm 11 4 it says, His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of man. You can't escape the eyesight of God.

You can't escape the X-ray vision of God Almighty. Will you be like the psalmist in Psalm 25, 15, Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord, for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

Of the wicked it says in Psalm 36, 1, The wicked, there is no fear of God before his eyes. And last one, Proverbs 15, 3, The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good. Friends, it makes you wonder, doesn't it? Will we be as those we've read who did that which was right in their own eyes?

And we could see, I sought to compare it to what's going on in the church scene where it's just anything goes. It's just chaos.

[31:29] I've heard it described as pandemonium. Now pandemonium means many demons. Some churches it's pandemonium or a disco or it's a liberal mixture of error and lies as people are holding hands with the whore of revelation with the Catholic system.

Friends, there's much to be desired. Are you going to be in that extreme and are you going to be blown this way by the winds of doctrine as you seek after sensationalism and excitement at the expense of truth?

Or will you be on this extreme where you're blown by winds of doctrine into the arms of Rome into all manner of falsehood and liberalism and all kinds of compromise with the vile things that the world considers as normal and acceptable today that the choose God's way will you choose the authority of the king of kings and the lord of lords I trust and pray that you will consider not to do that which is right in your own eyes but consider that which is right in the one with whom we have to do that his eyes behold his eyelids try the children of men Psalm 11 verse 4 I've been preaching to the converted this is all words to you you need Christ I trust I pray I beseech you tonight one day you'll be called into account his eyes are watching you you can't escape

Adam tried to run and he couldn't escape Adam where are you he knew where he was but he got hold of Adam and dealt with him or you be like Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord he repented he trusted his Saviour he was found in the ark he was found in the safety of salvation will you be found in him or will you be found outside of him I pray that you'll find grace in the eyes of the Lord let us pray