**SABBATH – NOW HEAR THIS!** Memory text: **1 Corinthians 10:11 NASB**
"Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."

**SABBATH AFTERNOON**

- In today's society – ppl speak of "personal truth"
    - By that / may mean = their experiences / opinions / feelings / convictions
    - Personal understanding of life
- Certainly, experiences/feelings matter
- But personal sincerity does not always equal truth
    - Feelings can change / opinions can be mistaken
    - Experiences can be misunderstood
- Must be / higher standard = by which every belief is tested

**John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the life."**
**John 17:17 "Sanctify them by Your truth, Your word is truth."**

- Biblical truth / not determined by
    - Popular option / personal preference / majority vote
- Truth is revealed in = Jesus Christ and written Word of God
- Throughout Scripture = God sent prophets to communicate His truth to His ppl
    - Sometimes = ppl received messages / repented
    - Other time = rejected message / attached messenger / continued in rebellion
- Prophetic message = not always comfortable
    - But always given for redemptive purposes
    - Lifegiving instruction from / loving God

**SUNDAY = Anger at God's Messenger = 3 lessons / how we should respond when God speaks**

**Lesson one: Fear Can Cause us to Reject God's Truth**

- Numbers 13/14 record one of saddest moments in Israel's wilderness experience
- God had delivered Israel from Egyptian slavery = performed miracle after miracle to provide their needs
- Finally, Israel stood near border of Promised Land
- 12 spies sent to investigate Canaan = returning, all agreed land was fruitful
- But 10 spies focused on = fortified cities / powerful inhabitants

**Numbers 13:31** "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we."

- Their report created fear thru/out camp
- Caleb/Joshua saw = same land / same cities / same giants
    - But reached completely different conclusion

**Number 11:30** "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."

- Caleb believed God was greater than giants
- Fear caused ppl to forget everything God had already done
- Cried, complained against Moses/Aaron and said:

**Numbers 14:4 "**Let us select a leader and return to Egypt."

- Fear quickly became anger = anger became rebellion
    - Even spoke of stoning Joshua/Caleb, who pleaded with them

**Numbers 14:8, 9** "If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us….

Only, do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land."

- Ppl believed frightening report / instead of God's faithful promise
- Fear can distort our spiritual vision
    - Making God's promises appear small / our problems appear enormous
- Fear can cause us to view God's messengers as enemies
    - When they are actually trying to lead us toward faith
- Faith does not mean that we never feel legitimate fear

**Psalm 56:3** "Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in you."

- Faith means = choose to trust God, even when we are afraid

**Lesson 2: Rejecting God's messenger doe not cancel God's message**

- Thru/out biblical history – ppl often became anger w/God's messenger
    - because they did not like the message
- God sent messengers because He had compassion for His ppl
- Ppl rejected prophets because they did not want to change
- Attacking messenger did not alter truth of God's Word
- Easy to condemn / ppl of the past
- More difficult to ask, "How do I respond when God's Word confronts me?"
    - Do I become defensive? Excuse my behavior?
    - Criticize the person who shares the truth?
    - Search for more comfortable interpretation?
- Or do I humbly pray, "Lord, show me what You want me to change?"

**Galatians 4:16** "Have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?"

- Faithful messenger may sometime say something we do not wat to hear
    - Before we reject messenger / should carefully compart message w/Scripture
    - If it agrees w/God's Word = our responsibility is to receive it

**Lesson 3: God preserved these warnings for our salvation**

- Bible = not merely record of what happened to other ppl long ago
    - It is God's instruction for us today
- **Their experiences were written so we could learn w/o repeating their mistakes**
- Do not allow fear to silence God's promises
- Do not reject God's message simply because it is uncomfortable
- Do not assume warnings of Scripture apply only to someone else
- The same God who spoke thru Moses / Caleb / Joshua still speaks thru His written Word
- We can become so confident in our own spiritual condition that we stop listening to God

**1 Corinthians 10:12 "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."**
**James 1:22 "Be doers of word / not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."**
**Revelation 2:7 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."**

- God's truth may challenge us, but it will never mislead us.
- His warnings may be uncomfortable, but they are given in love
- His Word does not merely inform us = it transforms/protects us = prepares us for eternity
- Let us hear = Word of the Lord / trust His promises / walk faithfully in His truth