

“No More Excuses”
John 15:22-25

Introduction:

1. Before We Had Back To John 15:
 - Let's First Turn In Our Bibles To:
 - Acts 9 - Where We Find The Account:
 - Of The Conversion Of A Jewish Man Named Saul:
 - On The Road To Damascus!
 - The Same Man:
 - Who Would Later Be Renamed:
 - Paul - Who Would Also Become:
 - One Of The Apostles / “Sent Ones” Of:
 - The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - And - In Acts 9:1-5 - We Find This Testimony:
 - “And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, / And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. / And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: / And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? / And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks!”
2. Now - A “Prick” Is Something Like:
 - An Animal Prod:
 - That May Be Used To Get:
 - An Animal To Go Somewhere Or Do Something:
 - That It Would Otherwise:
 - Not Want To Go Or Do!
 - Its Something That:
 - Would Be Unpleasant Enough:
 - To Get The Animal's Attention!
 - But - Once It Obeys & Complies:
 - It Can Get Relief!
 - And Yet - Before It Finally Figures That Out:
 - It Will Do Everything It Can:
 - To Express Its Displeasure In:
 - “The Prick!”
 - If The Animal Is A Bull:
 - It Might Run & Buck & Even Kick:
 - Against Those Pricks!
3. And - In Much The Same Way:
 - This Is What Was Happening:
 - To Saul - As Jesus Confronted Him:
 - With The Reality Of His Rebellion Against:
 - The God He Claimed To Serve!
 - And - This Is Also What Was Happening:
 - To So Many Others:
 - As Jesus Confronted Them:
 - About Their Rebellion:
 - All Throughout His Ministry!
 - That We've Been Looking At:
 - In The Gospel Of John!
4. So - Let's Now Turn Back To:
 - John 15 - Where:
 - After Jesus Describes To His Disciples:
 - What Their Relationship Will Be Like:
 - With The World!
 - And How The World Will Respond To:
 - Them & Their Message About Him:

- And - We Can See This Even Further:
 - With The Second “Prick” That WE Find In 15:22:
 - Which Is:

2. ***The Claims Of Christ!***

- Because - As Jesus Continues:
 - “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin!”
 - Of Course - Not Only *Did*:
 - Jesus Come To Them & To Us!
 - He Also - *Did*:
 - Speak Unto Them & Unto Us!
 - And - Whenever He Spoke:
 - He Spoke The Words Of His Father!
 - Which Are The Very Words:
 - Of God!
- Of Course - When Jesus:
 - Spoke To His Friends:
 - This Was True!
 - Even Has He Said Back In:
 - 15:15 - “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you!”
 - What A Claim This Is!
 - For Jesus To Make Known To His Disciples:
 - Not Just “Some Things” - But:
 - “All Things” He “Heard Of His Father!”
 - But - This Claim Is True!
 - Because - Whatever Jesus Says:
 - Is So!
 - And - Whenever Jesus Speaks:
 - Or Makes A Claim:
 - It Is A Prick - That Requires:
 - A Response!
- Because - Even When Jesus:
 - Spoke To His Foes:
 - He Continued To Speak To Them:
 - Nothing But The Words Of:
 - God The Father!
 - The Same God:
 - Who Many Of Them:
 - Claimed To Know & Even Belong To - As Jews!
 - Which Is Why In:
 - 8:28 - He Said To Them - “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things!”
 - What A Claim This Is!
 - But - This Claim Is Also True!
 - Because - Whatever Jesus Says:
 - Is So!
- And That Is Why - Whenever A Person:
 - Is Confronted & Pricked:
 - With The Truth Of The Claims Of Christ:
 - They Must Do Something:
 - With That Truth!
 - Because - In Theory:
 - If Jesus Didn’t Come To Them & If Jesus Didn’t Speak To Them:
 - They - As Jesus Puts It:
 - “They Had Not Had Sin!”
 - Now - Jesus Is Not Here Talking About:

- Sinlessness & Perfection!
 - Because - We Know That:
 - Even Before Jesus Came & Spoke To This World:
 - There Was Sin In This World!
 - Even From The Beginning!
 - With The Sin Of:
 - Adam & Eve!
- But - Jesus Is Here Talking About:
 - Their Own Personal Knowledge & Conviction Of:
 - A Particular Sin - Even:
 - The Greatest Sin - Which Is Disobedience To:
 - The Greatest Commandment!
- And - What Is The Greatest Commandment?
 - In Matthew 22:37-38 - Jesus Confirmed That:
 - “The First And Great Commandment” Is:
 - “Thou Shalt Love The Lord Thy God With All Thy Heart, And With All Thy Soul, And With All Thy Mind!”
- And - For Generation After Generation:
 - So Many Of The Jewish People Thought:
 - That They Had Kept This Commandment!
 - That - They Loved God!
 - Because - After All:
 - Wasn’t Their Choosing By God:
 - Proof Of Their Obedience To God?
 - And So - For Many:
 - They Lived In Blissful Ignorance:
 - Of Their True Relationship With God!
 - Just Like Saul - Before:
 - Acts 9!
- But Then - Jesus Did Come!
 - And - Jesus Did Speak!
 - And - He Spoke Like Noone Ever Did Before!
 - And - They Had Do Something:
 - With Who He Is & What He Said!
 - Either Accept & Believe!
 - Or - Reject - And Kick Against The Pricks!
- But - No Matter What They Did:
 - Jesus Says In 15:22:
 - “But now they have no cloke for their sin!”
 - So - The Sin Was Always There!
 - But Now - Because Of Jesus’ Coming & Because Of Jesus’ Claims:
 - They Had Nothing Else:
 - To Hide Their Sin! And:
 - They Had No More Excuses:
 - For Their Sin!
- Because - How Anyone Responds:
 - To Christ - Reveals:
 - The Truth About:
 - Their Relationship With God!
 - Because - As Jesus Says In:
 - 15:23 - “He that hateth me hateth my Father also!”
- If A Person Rejects:
 - The Coming & Claims Of Christ:
 - That Person:
 - Rejects Their Creator!
 - If A Person Hates Jesus:
 - That Person - In Truth:
 - Hates God!

- And - There Are No More Excuses:
 - For This - The Greatest:
 - Of Sins!
- When A Person Is Confronted:
 - With These Truths:
 - It Is Hard To Kick Against The Pricks!

* But - This Leads Us To A Third Truth & Prick - Which Is:

3. ***The Conduct Of Christ!***

- That We Find Next In 15:24:
 - “If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father!”
 - Once Again - Jesus Proves The Positive:
 - By Speaking In The Negative!
 - And - The Truth Is:
 - Jesus *Did* Many Works:
 - “Which None Other Man Did!”
 - And - He Could Say This Because:
 - He Did The Works Of God!
 - No Doubt - Jesus Is Talking About:
 - His Miracles!
 - Which He Even Described As:
 - Proof Of His Claims!
 - In Matthew 11:5-6 - He Reminded John The Baptist’s Disciples That:
 - “The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. / And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me!”
 - And - *All* Of Jesus Works:
 - Were The Works Of God!
 - In John 9 - When Jesus Gave Sight To The Man Born Blind - When His Disciples Asked Him - In 9:2:
 - “Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?”
 - Jesus Answered:
 - 9:3-5 - “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. / I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. / As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world!”
 - Jesus Did The Works Of God!
 - But - Even Though Jesus’ Miracles:
 - Were Truly Unique!
 - Everything Jesus Did:
 - He Did In A Way That:
 - “None Other Man Did!”
 - Because - He Was Completely Righteous!
 - And - In All That He Did:
 - He Did The Will Of God!
 - In 4:34 - Jesus Said:
 - “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work!”
 - So - All Jesus Did:
 - In His Conduct:
 - In This World - Where Not Only:
 - Great Works & Good Works:
 - They Were The Very Works Of God!
- And So - Once Again:
 - Whenever A Person:
 - Is Confronted & Pricked With:
 - The Truth Of His Conduct:
 - They Must Do Something:

- With This Truth!
- This Is Why Jesus Adds Again:
 - In 15:24 - In Theory:
 - If Jesus Did Not Do God's Works & God's Will In His Conduct:
 - Then - "They Had Not Had Sin!"
 - That Is - They Would Have Been Able:
 - To Continue To Live Their Lives:
 - In Ignorance Of:
 - Their True Relationship With God!
- But - The Conduct Of Jesus:
 - Will Always Expose A Person:
 - For Who They Really Are - And:
 - What They Really Do!
 - And - The Sad Truth Is:
 - That For Many - Even When They Feel These Pricks:
 - Instead Of Accepting Christ, They Will Continue To Reject Christ!
- Because - Even Then:
 - When They Saw God At Work:
 - In Jesus - They Hated:
 - Them Both!
 - As Jesus Put It:
 - 15:23 - "But now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father!"
- So - To Reject:
 - These "Pricks" Of Jesus:
 - His Coming!
 - His Claims!
 - And - His Conduct!
 - Is To Reject & To Hate:
 - The Very God That Some Might Say:
 - They Love!

* But - There's Just One More "Prick" We Find In These Verses - And That Is:

4. ***The Charge Of Christ!***

- Which We Find Next In 15:25:
 - Which Says - "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause!"
 - You See - The Rejection & Hatred:
 - Of His Own People:
 - Did Not Take Jesus:
 - By Surprise!
 - In Fact - It Was Something That:
 - Was Prophesied In The Scriptures:
 - That The Jews Claimed:
 - To Believe & To Follow!
 - Here - The "Law" Is Put:
 - For The Entire Old Testament:
 - As A Whole!
 - Which Was Often Described:
 - This Way!
 - But Here Also:
 - Jesus Calls The "Law" - "Their Law!"
 - Because It Was Something That:
 - They Probed Deeply Into!
 - They Took Pride In!
 - They Claimed To Practice!
 - So Much So - They Tried To Prioritize It In Every Area Of Life!
 - But - There Was One Part:
 - Found In Psalm 69:4 - Which:

- They Did Not Quite Apprehend Or Apply!
 - And That Was:
 - To Hate Someone Without A Cause / Without A Reason!
- Now - They Did Apply This:
 - To Themselves!
 - In Fact - Even Today:
 - The Jews See Themselves As:
 - Being Hated By The World:
 - “Without A Cause!”
 - Even In The Jewish Talmud:
 - They Consider Hatred Without A Cause:
 - As The Very Reasons Why:
 - Their Temples Were Destroyed!
 - Hatred From Without:
 - When The First Temple Was Destroyed:
 - By The Babylonians!
 - And Even - Hatred From Within:
 - When The Second Temple Was Destroyed:
 - By The Romans!
 - But - In Psalm 69 - So Many Of The Verses:
 - Were Not Meant To Be Applied To:
 - The People Of Israel - But To:
 - Their Messiah! To Christ Himself!
 - And So - It Was To Be Christ:
 - Who Would Be “Hated Without A Cause!”
- But - They Did Not Apply It:
 - To Jesus!
 - They Did Hate Him:
 - Without A Cause!
 - And In Doing So:
 - They Condemned Themselves:
 - And So - Were Without Excuse!

Conclusion:

1. Whenever A Person:
 - Is Confronted With:
 - The Coming Of Jesus!
 - The Claims Of Jesus!
 - The Conduct Of Jesus! And Even:
 - Their Charges By Jesus:
 - Through The Bible:
 - They Are Left With:
 - No More Excuses!
2. Because - It Is Hard To Kick:
 - Against The Truths:
 - Of These Pricks!
 - I Wonder If:
 - These Were The Same “Pricks” That Jesus Used:
 - To Get Saul’s Attention:
 - Even Before He Appeared To Him On The Road To Damascus!
3. But - Even Though:
 - Jesus Is Speaking Primarily About:
 - Those Who Ultimately:
 - Rejected Him!
 - The Same Principle Applies:
 - To You - Even When:
 - You Receive Him & Believe In Him!
4. Because - What Is:

- Your Responsibility:
 - Now That You Do Know Christ?
 - Well - There Are Many!
 - But - They Can Be Summed Up:
 - In What Jesus Said Back In 15:4:
 - “Abide In Me!”
 - To Abide In Christ:
 - Involves Faith - First & Foremost!
 - But Then - It Goes Further!
 - And Includes:
 - Fellowship With Christ!
 - Faithfulness To Christ! And:
 - Fruitfulness For Christ!
5. Are You Abiding In Christ?
- Because Of His Coming:
 - For You - You Have No More Excuses:
 - For Not Abiding In Fellowship:
 - With Him!
 - Because Of His Claims:
 - To You - You Have No More Excuses:
 - For Not Striving To Be Faithful:
 - To Him!
 - And - Because Of His Conduct:
 - Before You - You Have No More Excuses:
 - For Not Being Fruitful:
 - Through His Example & Enabling Power!
 - And - Every Time:
 - You Learn About His Coming!
 - You Hear His Claims! And:
 - You See His Conduct:
 - Through God’s Word:
 - Stop Kicking Against His Pricks!
 - And Just Follow Him!
6. It Is Hard To Kick Against These Truths!
- So - Receive & Respond To Them!
 - Go Where He Wants You To Go!
 - Do What He Wants You To Do!
 - And - Be What He Wants You To Be!
 - Because - You Have:
 - No More Excuses:
 - To Remain In Rebellion & Sin!
 - Because - When You Get “Pricked” By God:
 - With These Truths:
 - It Will Leave You With:
 - No More Excuses!
 - And - Without Surrendering Yourself:
 - To The Lord:
 - You Too Will Find It:
 - “Hard To Kick Against The Pricks!”

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