

1.21.18 ~ **John 7:14-24**, "Jesus: God's Sovereign Servant"

Last week we studied about Jesus being in Galilee with His disciples and how He was not going to go up to the Feast of Booths with His family, but instead He stayed in Galilee for a time and went up later, it would seem, by Himself.

There is no mention of Jesus' disciples in chapters 7 or 8 of John and it appears that we will not hear of the Twelve again until chapter 9. Chapters 7-8 are an ongoing confrontation between Jesus and the Jews (*Religious Leaders*).

Read John 7:14-16... Jesus shows up at the temple in Jerusalem, in the middle of the feast, and He begins to teach. The Jews are amazed and somewhat alarmed at Jesus' understanding of, and ability to instruct from, Scripture.

The first thing the Jews do is to pronounce doubts concerning Jesus' credentials and His authority to teach publicly. They are saying that Jesus had not received training from any of the established schools of rabbinical instruction they were aware of or had approved.

They knew nothing about His education but they didn't approve of Him and therefore, they challenged His right to speak at the synagogue.

You have to love Jesus' response to them in verse 16...

Jesus didn't acquire His knowledge of the Scriptures and authority to teach, from any human institution, school of rabbinical training, or from any Chief Priest or Pharisee. Jesus' supernatural knowledge of, and ability to teach, the Scriptures, came directly from God the Father in heaven, who had sent Him.

Jesus' awareness and acceptance of His submission to the Father is repeatedly stated in the Scripture, we have already looked at many of those recorded narratives in John's Gospel (cf. 3:17; 4:34; 5:24, 30, 36-37; 6:38-39, 44, 57); there are many more to come (cf. 7:28-29, 33; 8:26, 38, 40; 14:10, 24; 17:8, 14)

Jesus taught as one innately empowered with sovereign knowledge and authority. Jesus' teaching was very different from that of the rabbis and teachers of the law, for they would often quote other teachers like themselves as the authority for their teaching; whereas, Jesus spoke His words with the authority given to Him by the Father whom He was serving.

Matthew 7:28-29, *"When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at His teaching, because He taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law."*

Read John 7:17... If anyone is willing to receive God's Word, they will know that Jesus Christ is speaking the truth, in fact, He is the truth.

In **John 6:28-29** the people ask what they must do to do what God requires, i.e., what must they do to do God's will? Jesus answers the people saying, *"The work of God [God's will] is this: to believe in the One He has sent."*

Do you see? If the people will but believe what Jesus is telling them about Himself, they will understand that He is from God, that He is God!

In **John 5:39-40** Jesus says to the Jews, *"You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me to have life."*

God's revealed plan and provision of forgiveness and eternal life is embodied in a person, that person is Jesus Christ the Lord (see **Colossians 1:15-20**)!

Read John 7:18... Many false teachers have come and gone, and there will be more as it draws near to the end of this age. You can recognize these false teachers, false prophets and wannabe messiahs by the fact that they always speak on their own authority, seeking their own glory, and their teachings do not align with the inerrant, infallible, sovereign and eternal Word of God; but instead their teachings are from their father, satan himself (**John 8:44**), "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. 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."

Instead of feeding and caring for the flock, these liars and deceivers fleece and slaughter the sheep (**Romans 16:18**), "*For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people,*" (**Philippians 3:19**), "*Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things,*" (**Matthew 23:5-7**), "*Everything they do is done for men to see...*" "...*they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi'*" [Teacher].

Jesus came seeking the glory of His Father who sent Him, and in Him there is no fault, no unrighteousness, nothing that is displeasing to the Father.

Read John 7:19-20... The Religious Leaders of Israel prided themselves on keeping the Law of Moses (in an effort to earn salvation through self-righteous works); but Jesus declares, no one keeps the Law and no one will be made righteous by doing so!

Romans 3:10-12, "*As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.'*"

Romans 3:20, "*Therefore no one will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.*"

Galatians 3:24, "*So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.*"

Ephesians 2:8-9, "*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast.*"

The Law of Moses cannot save anyone, but condemns everyone, the Law reveals sin (in us), making us unacceptable to God (cf. **Romans 3:23; 6:23**).

Look again at **John 7:19-20...** Jesus asks the Jews why they are trying to kill Him, the crowd declares that He must be possessed by a demon, otherwise why would He say that anyone was trying to kill Him (see **John 5:16-18; 7:1**).

Read John 7:21-24... Jesus pays no attention to the crowd's ignorance in saying that He must have a demon; instead, He goes right to the heart of the problem, the hypocritical self-righteous elevation of law keeping.

The "one miracle" Jesus is talking about is the one we studied in John 5, when Jesus healed the invalid man on the Sabbath at the pool of Bethesda (see **John 5:5, 8-9**).

You would think that miracle would be enough for the religious leaders to believe in Him, but instead they sought to kill Him because in their twisted minds, Jesus was breaking the Sabbath (**John 5:16-18**).

Back to **John 7:22-23**... Jesus explains that the Jews have totally misunderstood Sabbath regulations. He reminds them how they adhere to the practice of circumcision (all male children must be circumcised on the eighth day), even if that day falls on a Sabbath.

Circumcision came through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; but it was later included in the Law of Moses (cf. Genesis 17:12; Leviticus 12:3; Luke 1:59; 2:21).

Circumcision seems to take precedence over Sabbath regulations, as the Israelites "break" the Sabbath by doing work (the circumcision of a baby), in order to keep the Law of Moses. Why then are they so angry at Jesus (to the point of wanting to kill Him) for healing a man on the Sabbath, when it is always okay to do a good deed on the Sabbath (see **Matthew 12:1-13; Luke 13:10-17**).

Jesus gives a strong exhortation to the Jews (**John 7:24**); that they should not make superficial, ritualistic or legalistic judgements about God's will and God's ways; instead, they should find out what pleases God and seek to do it!

1Samuel 16:7, *"The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

Hosea 6:6, *"For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings."*

Micah 6:8, *"He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."*

Jesus Christ, God's Son, Served His Father completely by dying for our sins and granting us eternal life.

Pastor Mike

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