

John Chapter 7 Continued

We will repeat verse 16 from the last lesson.

John 7:16 "Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me."

The qualitative difference of Jesus' teaching was found in its source, i.e., the Father gave it to Him. It originated from God the Father Himself, in contrast to rabbis who received it from man. While rabbis relied on the authority of others (a long chain of human traditions), Jesus' authority centered in Himself.

The Father and Son are of the very same doctrine. In fact, they are one in the Spirit. There really was no contradiction of the Old Testament and New Testament.

John 7:17 "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

If any man will do God's will, He shall know the truth. Jesus is telling them here, that just knowing the letter of the law is not enough; they must know the Giver of the law. They must be willing for God's will to be done in their lives.

You could memorize every word in the Bible; but it would do you no good, unless you allowed God to open your understanding to His Word. Jesus says "If you are truly in right standing with God and His Word, then you know that I am of God."

You see, the entire Bible is all about Jesus Christ. He is the theme of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Those who are fundamentally committed to doing the will of God will be guided by Him in the affirmation of His truth. God's truth is self-authenticating through the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

In short, if you are not filled with the Holy Spirit and are led and guided by Him, you are not a Christian.

John 7:18 "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him."

Jesus, over and over, stresses that He is in the will of the Father. This is very similar to what everyone who ministers in the name of the Lord should be. The message is worthwhile, if it originates with God. The person bringing the message must give the glory to God where it belongs.

Of course, Jesus is the Word, the Truth. He has no apologies to make to anyone. Since they are viewing Him as just a man, He explains this as if He were a man. Jesus says, "Give the glory to the Father who sent Him."

While other saviors and messiahs acted from their own selfish interests, thereby revealing their falseness, Jesus Christ as God's Son came solely to glorify the Father and accomplish the Father's will.

John 7:19 "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?"

Jesus has fulfilled the law, not broken it. These rulers of the temple have twisted God's law around to fit their own needs. And this is part of the reason they do not recognize Jesus as Messiah Lord.

Even their law says "Thou shalt not kill", and yet, they are plotting right now to kill the Messiah.

If Jesus were another religious fake, the world never would have reacted in such hatred. Since the evil world system loves its own, its hatred toward Him demonstrates that He came from God.

John 7:20 "The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?"

Anything they didn't understand, they proclaimed as a devil. They knew they were plotting to kill Jesus; but now that He knew it, they lied and denied it.

John 7:21 "Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel."

The context makes clear (v.22-23), that Jesus had reference to the healing of the paralytic that evoked the beginning of persecution against Him by the Jewish authorities because it took place on the Sabbath. (5:1-16).

John 7:22 "Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man."

The patriarchal period during the time of Abraham when God instituted the sign of circumcision which was later included as part of the Mosaic covenant at Sinai. This observation not only depreciated the Jewish esteem for Moses, but even more importantly showed that this rite was antecedent to the Mosaic Law and took precedence over it. Furthermore, circumcision antedates the Sabbath Law also.

Jesus is trying to tell them here, that He is doing good on the Sabbath. They actually break the Sabbath when they circumcise a man; but they think nothing of that, since it is them doing it. You see, He is showing them with this comparison just how foolish it is to criticize Him for healing someone on the Sabbath.

They marvel, not only at the fact of healing on the Sabbath, but also they marvel at His great ability.

John 7:23 “If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?”

The law required that circumcision occur on the eighth day. If a child was born on the Sabbath, then the eighth day would fall again on the subsequent Sabbath, when the Jews would circumcise the child. Jesus’ point was that the Jews broke their own Sabbath law with the circumcision of the child. Their hypocrisy is evident.

Jesus used an argument of the lesser to the greater. If ceremonial cleansing of one part of the body is permitted on the Sabbath through the act of circumcision (the less), how much more so should the actual healing of the entire body be permitted on the Sabbath (the greater).

John 7:24 “Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”

You see, a male Hebrew child must be circumcised on the eighth day. This surgical procedure, which God required of all males since the time of Abraham, must be done on the eighth day. If the eighth day fell on a Sabbath, they had to break Sabbath to circumcise the child.

Circumcision was necessary to be a part of the covenant of Abraham. Jesus is trying to make them see that Sabbath was not a technicality, but a help to the people. He is saying to them “Don't judge with your mind. Judge with your heart.”

If God's laws are in our heart, our heart will judge righteously.

While Jesus forbade harsh, censorious judgment that self-righteous legalism promotes, He demanded the exercise of moral and theological discernment.

In (verses 25-36), John once again reiterated the claims of Jesus to His identity as the Messiah and Son of God. He focused on His divine origin and citizenship. While some believed in Him at this time (verse 31), the religious leaders became even angrier at Him and nefariously planned to seize Him (verse 32). Jesus confronted the people with 3 dilemmas recorded in the verses:

- (1) The problem of dense confusion (verses 25-29),
- (2) The problem of divided conviction (verses 30-32),
- (3) The problem of delayed conversion (verses 33-36).

These 3 problems left Jerusalem in a state of utter despair.

John 7:25 “Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?”

You see, even the Jewish people scattered throughout Jerusalem were aware that the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus. They were astonished that He was teaching and they had not captured Him.

John 7:26 “But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?”

What surprised the masses was that in spite of the ominous threat from the religious authorities (verses 20 & 32); Jesus boldly proclaimed His identity.

The question indicates the crowds and the rulers were in great confusion and uncertainty as to who Jesus was and what to do about Him. They did not really have any firm convictions regarding Jesus’ identity, for their question reveals their doubt and unbelief.

They were also perplexed at the religious leaders’ failure to arrest and silence Him if He really was a fraud. Such dense confusion caused the crowd to wonder if the religious authorities in private concluded that He was indeed the Christ. Mass confusion among all groups reigned regarding Jesus.

These Jews believe that the reason the rulers have not done anything to Jesus is because they know Jesus truly is the Christ (Messiah). They realize that these rulers are no match for Jesus. Every time they verbally attack Jesus, He makes them look foolish with His answers. They suddenly realize that Jesus is too much for these rulers of the temple.

John 7:27 “Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.”

Only information regarding Messiah’s birthplace was revealed in Scripture. Beyond that, a tradition had developed in Jewish circles that Messiah would appear suddenly to the people, based on a misinterpretation of (Isaiah 53:8 and Mal. 3:1).

In light of this, the meaning of this phrase most likely is that the identity of the Messiah would be wholly unknown until He suddenly appeared in Israel and accomplished Israel’s redemption. In contrast, Jesus had lived His life in Nazareth and was known (at least superficially), to the people (verse 28).

They could not believe Jesus was Messiah, because they knew Him and His family. They had a belief that Messiah would suddenly come down in Jerusalem from the skies and wrench their land out of Roman hands. They thought He would be a great Warrior King. Perhaps, they had His second coming mixed up with His first.

Really, the Old Testament Scriptures said He would be born in Bethlehem of a virgin mother. Had they really understood the Old Testament, they would have known this to be their Messiah. Their view of Jesus is what deceived them.

John 7:28 “Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.”

Jesus gave the greatest publicity to this important teaching by voicing it loudly. Jesus told them that they both knew Him and knew where He was from. These words stand in antithesis with (8:19), where Jesus told His enemies that they neither knew Him nor the Father, thus indicating a deep irony and sarcasm on Jesus’ part here.

Jesus says to them “Yes, you know me in the flesh. You know my mother, and you know that I have lived among you in the flesh; but you really have no comprehension of who I am.” The Spirit of Jesus, they did not understand.

They knew the people He lived around could not do the miracles He did, but they could only see His flesh. They could not put it out of their mind that He had grown up among them. It is very difficult today for many people who profess to be believers in Christ to see beyond His flesh.

They knew Him in the earthly sense, but not in the spiritual sense, because they didn’t know God either.

John 7:29 “But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.”

I say one more time; He was Immanuel (God with us). Jesus tells them one more time above, that God the Father sent Him. Jesus had lived in heaven and was called the Word of God. This Word of God took on the form of flesh and came to earth to save mankind. Jesus is on a mission (to save all of mankind who will accept Him).

John 7:30 “Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.”

You can see from this statement that no one could take hold of Jesus, until He was willing for them to.

This reveals the reason why they could not seize Him, i.e., God’s sovereign timetable and plan for Jesus would not allow it.

They were restrained by God and kept from capturing Him now. When the right time comes, they will be able to take Him; because He will be ready to fulfill His mission.

John 7:31 “And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?”

Divided conviction existed among the people regarding Jesus. While some wanted to seize Him, a small remnant of genuine believers existed among the crowds. The question here anticipates a negative answer, i.e. the Messiah could do no greater kinds of miracles than those Jesus had done. We read that so many miracles were done that all the books of the world could not contain

all of them. No one had ever done miracles like these before. This is a good question they asked; that when Christ comes would He do more. The answer is no. No one would, or could do more. We can see here that many believed because of the miracles.

John Chapter 7 Continued Questions

1. Whose doctrine was Jesus preaching?
2. Who are those who will know this doctrine?
3. Just knowing the letter of the law is not enough, who must they know?
4. If you memorized the Bible, it would do you no good, unless you did what else?
5. Who is the theme of the Bible?
6. He who speaketh of himself seeketh what?
7. The message of any minister is good, if it originates where?
8. Who does Jesus say to give glory to?
9. Who gave them the law?
10. What question did Jesus ask of them, if they didn't keep the law themselves?
11. What did they accuse Jesus of having?
12. What did they marvel at in verse 21?
13. They thought Moses gave them circumcision, but where did it really come from?
14. What did Jesus tell them to judge not according to?
15. How were they to judge?
16. What day must a male Hebrew baby be circumcised?
17. If the day fell on Sabbath, what must they do?
18. In verse 25, some from Jerusalem said what?
19. Do the rulers know, indeed, that this is _____.
20. Why was it so hard for them to believe this was Christ?

21. What were they expecting the Messiah to be like?
22. Who did Jesus say He came from?
23. Why did they not take Jesus now?
24. Some believed and said what?