

Jesus, a Man against the current of the world.

If you have believed in Jesus for eternal life, you need to know that you have placed your faith in a man who is hated by the world.

What I believe we are going to learn today is this:

DURING HIS EARTHLY MINISTRY, JESUS WAS COMPLETELY MISUNDERSTOOD BY THOSE WHO WERE APART OF HIS OWN FAMILY, AND HE WAS HATED BY THOSE WHO THOUGHT THEY WERE RIGHTEOUS BEFORE GOD.

I'd like for us to look at this text in four parts.

Part #1 - John gives the time and place of the narrative. **7:1-2**

7:1 - Jesus had spent His summer in Galilee and never went south to Judea. In Galilee, Jesus was not running the risk of losing His life, but in Judea, the Jews wanted Him dead. Jesus stayed away from Judea and ministered up north in Galilee. It was not yet His time to die.

People wanted to kill Jesus because He was presenting the truth of God. They wanted to kill the one presenting God's gracious offer of eternal life.

7:2 - The Feast of Booths was a week long event of Israel that took place in the fall. It was also called the Feast of Tabernacles. This Feast was at the end of harvest season. It really emphasized a thanksgiving attitude for Israel as they celebrated God's provision that year in the harvest. During this God ordained festival, all native-born Israelites were required to spend a week living in a homemade tent. This feast was designed to celebrate God's provision and remember that God had their ancestors dwell in tents in the wilderness after He had brought the people of Israel out of Egypt back in the days of Moses. cf. Leviticus 23:33-44; Deuteronomy 16:13-15.

Part #2 - Jesus' brothers come to Him with a worldly proposal. **7:3-4**

7:3 - Jesus had four brothers (Mark 6:3): James, Joses, Judas, and Simon. These would be the half brothers of Jesus. What the brothers of Jesus say to Him is: "leave Capernaum, and go up to Judea, so that You can make a name for yourself again."

In chapter 6, Jesus was at the height of popularity, but as He taught truth, His popularity dwindled. His teaching was beginning to separate true and false followers. Jesus' words were hard to handle, so those who didn't really want to hear the truth stopped listening.

7:4 - Jesus' brothers were thinking, "isn't your objective to be a public figure? Don't you want a big following? If so, go back and give the people what they want. Give them a good show."

These guys come to Jesus with a logical marketing strategy. This is the marketing strategy of the world, and Jesus is not on board with that strategy. What is sad about it is that so many churches, and pastors, and elders, have ignored this and have fallen for worldly marketing tactics.

Part #3 - John tells us why the brothers gave their worldly proposal.

7:5 - Why did Jesus' brothers approach Him the way that they did? Because they didn't understand who He was. They were not believing in Him. They did not believe that through faith in Him they would have eternal life.

If you choose to live life in close fellowship with Christ, it is very likely that you will experience the same. You will have people who know you well but don't understand you.

This verse also teaches us that close proximity to Jesus does not automatically make someone right with God. Just because you know someone who has a deep commitment to Jesus doesn't mean you do. You may have parents who are mature believers in Christ but that doesn't make you one. Being right with God is a matter of personal trust in Jesus or not. It is as simple as that.

Part #4 - Jesus gives a heavenly response to a worldly proposal.

He really gives 6 responses, so we will look at each one.

(Response #1) This feast is not a good opportunity for Me to show off miraculous power to the crowds.

7:6 - In Jesus' first response, He says "This isn't about me. 'My time' is not yet here. I'm not here to gain worldly fame and glory for myself. I am here to glorify my Father. I am here to honor Him. I am here to do His will. I have a job to do. That job is not to put on a show for the crowds. That job is to humble myself before God and do His will."

And if you are really walking in tune with God, then you will have the same mindset. You will make decisions in life based on how you can bring glory and honor to God and not yourself.

(Response #2) Anytime is a good opportunity for you to show off to others.

He moves on to his second response to them "but your time is always here." In other words, Jesus says, "You guys are free to do what you want. You want worldly fame and glory? Go for it."

Those who aren't children of God through faith in Jesus are not under God's guidance. They are free to live life however they want. They are free to indulge in sin. They are free to run their own

life. But for us who are the faithful in Christ, we are no longer enslaved to our fleshly desires. We are free to serve God and we have a new mindset: the righteousness of God.

(Response #3) You are not hated by the world because you are apart of the world.

7:7 - Jesus tells them, "You go after what the world offers. The world will celebrate you. You won't be hated because you fit right in. Your ambitions, your mindset, your values agree with the world"

If you embrace what the world embraces, the world will be your friend. If you're a go with the flow kind of person, you wont be hated. If you never make any waves for God, you will be liked by everyone, but does God want you to be like by the world while Jesus was hated by the world?

(Response #4) I'm hated by the world because I witness against the world.

Jesus says to them, "You fit right in with this world, but I don't. I'm not a part of the world's system. I am not after what the world offers. The world can't hate you, but it does hate me."

Why does the world hate Jesus? I've mentioned how the world hates Jesus, but why?

Well, here is an answer from Jesus Himself, "because I testify of it that its works are evil." Jesus testifies that the works of the world are evil. Not only was Jesus declaring with His words that the world is full of evil works, but He was also a living example that proved to the world that its works are evil. Jesus' lips and Jesus' life exposed the evil of this world. And the world hates to be exposed, so the world hated Jesus then, and the world hates Jesus now.

I want us to consider the context. In Judea, we find Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the center of the Jewish religion. The city of Jerusalem prided itself on having the temple of God. The city of Jerusalem prided itself on being the place where God dwells. This is where people prided themselves on being God's chosen ones. This is where people prided themselves on being devout, law following, righteous people. But these prideful, religious zealots, with all their outward righteousness, in their hearts, wanted to take the Son of God down. It was the so-called righteous chosen people of God that were trying to kill the Son of God.

Jesus is saying that their works based system of religion is evil. It is an affront to God, and it is evil to try to show God that you deserve eternal life. It is evil to attempt to show God that you have met His standard of righteousness. The Jews knew they were sinners, but they tried to hide their sin in their religious practice. They put on a show before men, but God cannot be fooled. Jesus saw that they were frauds. They claimed to be righteous, but they weren't. They were sinners, trying to cover their sin. God is no fool. God knows all. And God came to earth in the flesh, in the person of Jesus, to show religious frauds that they too were sinners, like everyone else.

Are you like the ones Jesus is talking about? Are you trying to prove your way to God and are you putting on a show for others but deep down you know you're a sinner deserving of God's judgment?

(Response #5) I won't go to the feast in the way you want Me to.

7:8 - We will find that Jesus does eventually go up to this feast. Some have accused Jesus of lying. But He isn't lying. Verse 10 give us the explanation to verse 8. Jesus refused to go up and publicly display Himself in the way in which His brothers were requesting of Him. Instead, of going up to the feast to show off, He will go up privately.

He said that His time had not yet fully come. Someday Jesus would go back to Jerusalem, and He would go in with a big entry. That would be six months after this event. He would enter Jerusalem and present Himself as the King of Israel, offering Israel a kingdom. The crowds would cheer for Him at first, but by the end of the week, they would be cheering for Pilot to crucify Him. That day would come, but for now, this was not His opportune time.

(Response #6) Jesus stays back in Galilee.

7:9 - As all of Israel is showing up for a major feast of the nation, the crowds are coming, the religious atmosphere is high, the excitement is rising, and the intention is to worship God, but God is not there. Jesus, who is God in the flesh, was not at this religious gathering.

There are many churches that began with Biblical truth, but now they reject God and have become part of the world. May that never happen to this church.

How to we prevent that from happening? I'll give four suggestions.

(Suggestion #1) Let us never stray from preaching the Bible.

(Suggestion #2) Let us never teach the Bible what it says, rather, we must let the Bible teach us.

(Suggestion #3) Let us never put our trust in us, rather, we must completely depend on God.

(Suggestion #4) Let us never promote to leadership unqualified men.

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